PORT ARTHUR

THE SIEGE AND CAPITULATION

Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett

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PORT ARTHUR

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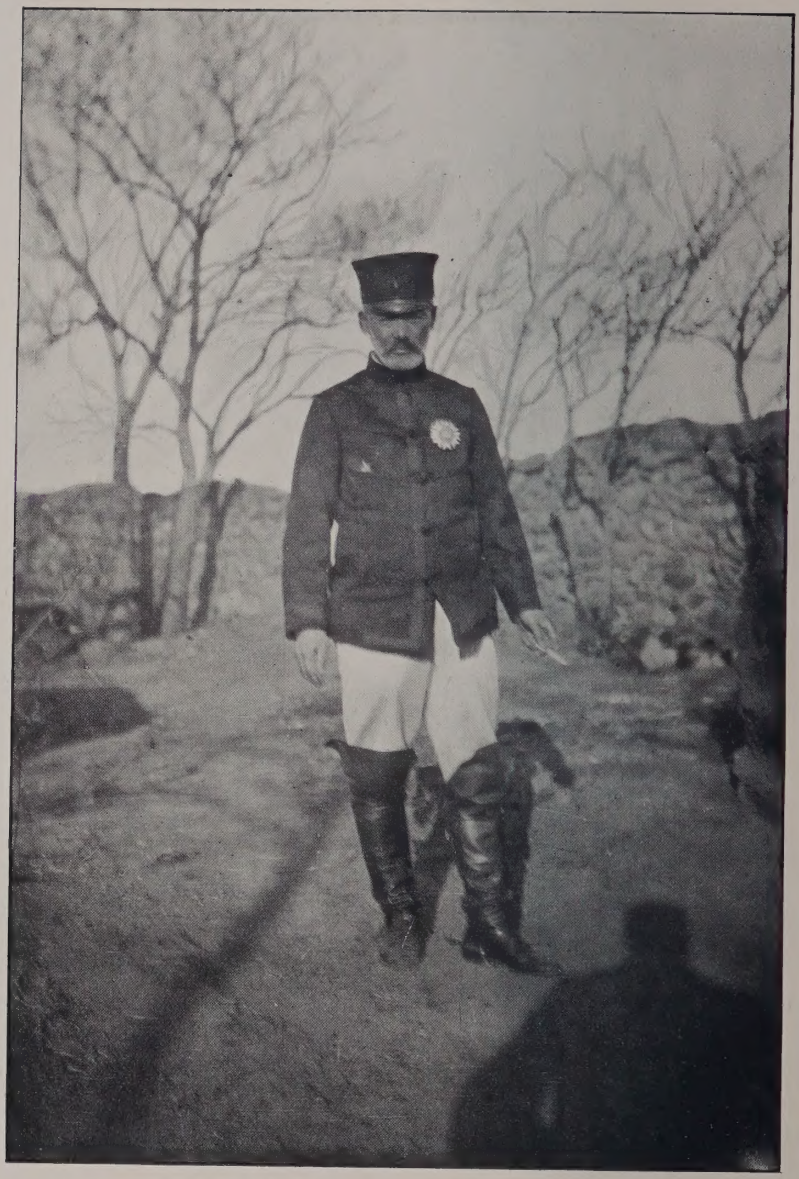

GENERAL BARON NOGI,

TAKEN ON THE MORNING OF THE CAPITULATION.

PORT ARTHUR

THE SIEGE
AND
CAPITULATION

BY

ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT

SECOND EDITION

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PREFACE.

It has been my endeavour in the following pages to describe the Siege of Port Arthur. I joined the Third Army at the commencement of August 1904, just before the first assault, remained attached to General Nogi's headquarters until January 17, 1905, and entered the fortress with the victorious Japanese. An account written by an eye-witness who has not had access to official documents can hardly be considered complete or final. Whether these will ever be given to the world is a matter of great doubt, because the story of Port Arthur is such a tragedy to Japanese arms from beginning to end that the Headquarters Staff are not likely—at least, until the present generation has passed away—to admit the faulty tactics which an official history of the Siege would disclose.

With regard to the campaign in Manchuria, some time must necessarily elapse before an accurate history can be written. The arena was so large and the events so complicated that they can hardly yet be viewed in

the right perspective. Nor will it ever be possible for a spectator to give a satisfactory account of those great battles.

The tactical intention and entire sequence of a sustained engagement depends on the orders issued by the Headquarters Staff to the army corps' commanders, and by the latter to the commanders of divisions and brigades. All such orders, and the reasons which dictated them, remain secrets in the archives of the War Office in Tokio. Until some impartial Japanese critic weighs the evidence and writes a true history of the campaign, the world is not likely to know the why and the wherefore of many decisions and events which are at present inexplicable.

These objections, which apply so forcibly to an attempt to write a history of the campaign in Manchuria, only in a small measure exist when an eye-witness essays to write the story of the Siege of Port Arthur. The work of the artillery and engineers, which played such an important part in the siege, could be easily watched; but beyond that, there was no opportunity for a display of grand strategy or the high art of war before the Russian stronghold. Both were limited to the placing of thousands of men in as close proximity as possible to the enemy's works, and at periodical intervals calling upon them to attack.

The only mystery involved is the motive for the decision which caused the Japanese to make the immense sacrifice of life which was bound to result from frontal attacks on impregnable positions. Although we have no access to the correspondence which

passed between Tokio, Manchuria, and General Nogi's headquarters before the fortress, any one of average intelligence who takes the trouble to consider the strategical situation on land and sea might compose a fairly accurate *résumé* of the despatches which guided the policy adopted.

The great assaults on Port Arthur could not have been better witnessed had they been mounted at Drury Lane. The configuration of the ground on which the Russian works were constructed provided an ideal stage for the actors in the drama. The low Suishien Valley, at the foot of the chain of forts, enabled onlookers to gaze up, as it were, from the stalls to the footlights. It would have been impossible to occupy a position in close proximity to the scene of hostilities without some protection from rifle, machine-gun, and artillery. Shelter was provided by the network of trenches which, like the stalls in a theatre, allowed those present to choose their own distance from which to watch the combat.

As we have probably witnessed old-fashioned assaults and close-order formations for the last time, it has been one of my chief objects to place on record the obsolete method of fighting which characterised the siege. I have tried to present an accurate picture of how men meet in masses to settle the disputes of their governments with bayonet, clubbed rifle, and hand-grenade; their behaviour in action and in the moments preceding an attack; the way in which they advance and retire, and are seized with sudden panics; what a modern bombardment means when 500

guns are engaged; the effect of an explosion of 2000 pounds of dynamite under a fort; and how famous generals, whose names are household words, act amidst the scenes of their exploits.

It was the original intention to publish this book before Christmas, but owing to the labour involved, especially in the preparation of accurate maps, upon which the greatest care has been exercised, its appearance has been delayed.

My thanks are due to 'The Times' for permission to utilise some of the articles which I contributed to its columns. I am also indebted to my friends, Mr Reginald Glossop, Mr Gerald Morgan, and Captain Fortescue, U.S. Army, for information in regard to many details which came under their immediate notice while at the front.

E. A.-B.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	THE CAUSE OF THE WAR	1
	The value of Port Arthur; the action of the Powers; preparation.	
II.	DALNY	8
	An abode of luxury; a military base; a panic.	
III.	THE BATTLE OF NANSHAN	15
	The ground-plan; the gunboats; advance of the Osakas; the rout.	
IV.	ADVANCE OF THE JAPANESE	25
	The Russian position; capture of Kensan; arrival of reinforcements; effect of artillery fire; the Russians retreat; casualties.	
V.	DESCRIPTION OF THE DEFENCES	38
	1. The eastern section; 2. The western section; 3. Outlying works.	
VI.	CAPTURE OF TAIKOSAN AND SHYOKOSAN . .	55
	The attack; plan of action; shell-fire from warships; a complete victory.	
VII.	THE STRATEGICAL SITUATION ON LAND AND SEA .	64
	A *coup-de-main;* the Baltic Squadron; failure of the plans.	
VIII.	CAPTURE OF BANRHUSAN WORKS	71
	The Suishien valley; recapture of Fort Kouropatkin; a conference; death of Colonel Ouchi; General Ichinohe.	
IX.	THE GREAT NIGHT ATTACK	83
	Bodai; a reckless decision; a night expedition; a wonderful spectacle; the searchlights; an inferno; Nippon Banzai! cessation of the combat; defeat of the Japanese.	

X. JAPANESE CAMP LIFE 103

Beri beri; Japanese rations; a night alarm; Japanese fortitude; headquarters; General Nogi; correspondents; shells; the Shell Strewn Road; the advance saps; life in the saps; Suishien; the Russian sharpshooters; Japanese shelters; canteens; General Oshima.

XI. RESUMPTION OF ACTIVE OPERATIONS . . . 137

203 Metre Hill; the bombardment; the attack; position at dawn; the assault; hand-grenades; failure of the attack; attack on Fort Kouropatkin; interior of lunettes.

XII. ARTILLERY AND TELEPHONES 157

28-centimetre howitzers; position of howitzers; the telephone; the Chief of Artillery; feeding the guns; a collision.

XIII. MEN AND MANNERS 170

The first 500-pounder; Nogi's luncheon; Banrhusan East; at close quarters; nocturnal bombardment; life in the trenches; the wooden mortar; the unknown death; cutting the wire; the eve of battle.

XIV. CAPTURE OF HACHIMACHAYAMA 191

Caught in a trap; a battue; refreshment; attack on Nirusan; army photography; the effect of nerves; Japanese sentries.

XV. THE ASSAULT OF OCTOBER 30TH 207

The Emperor's birthday; prayers for victory; North Keikwansan; optimism of the gunners; a terrific bombardment; method of attack; a ghastly spectacle; the effect of shrapnel; a forlorn hope; a sudden panic; uncertainty; a second repulse.

XVI. SAPPING AND MINING 232

Underground warfare; a difficult problem; a daring sapper; Nirusan and Shojusan; mining; the explosion.

XVII. HOSPITALS AND TRANSPORT 245

Dressing-stations; hopeless cases; Dalny; Chorashi; transportation.

XVIII. LIFE AT THE FRONT 256

Chinese farms; a Chinese family; a peaceful people; hospitable captains; Colonel Teruda; Major-General Baba.

XIX. THE EVE OF GREAT EVENTS 268

The Baltic Fleet; preparations; the 7th Division; Higashi Keikwansan; a comfortable fight; celebrating the success.

XX. THE ASSAULT OF NOVEMBER 26TH . . . 281

Batteries in action; a warlike priest; machinery of war; war as a spectacle; attack of the 12th Regiment; North Keikwansan; a terrible struggle; a brave officer; failure of the attack; Nakamura's night attack; an inferno; Tsuchiya wounded.

XXI. THE ASSAULT AND CAPTURE OF 203 METRE HILL . 307

A plain issue; the ground-plan; position of the combatants; repeated attacks; a sortie; the 28-centimetre shells; attack of the 7th Division; a sudden panic; modern shell-fire; the final attack; a carpet of dead; human entrenchments.

XXII. DESTRUCTION OF THE RUSSIAN WARSHIPS . . 333

Togo visits Royusan; an armistice; a strange speech; friendly intercourse; winter dwellings; the Intelligence Department.

XXIII. THE FALL OF NORTH KEIKWANSAN AND NIRUSAN . 347

Futile attacks; the mines; the explosion; General Samejima; death of Kondrachenko; Christmas Day; a furious charge; Oshima's bath.

XXIV. THE FINAL OPERATIONS 364

Shojusan; enthusiasm of the soldiers; a strange incident; scene on the captured positions; assault on Bodai; capture of Bodai; end of the siege.

XXV. SURRENDER AND CELEBRATION . . . 378

Nogi replies to Stoessel; the last shell; breaking the news; the capitulation; the Japanese ultimatum; the signatures; "Mafficking"; Nogi's consideration; General Stoessel; meeting of Nogi and Stoessel; the two generals.

XXVI. CLOSING SCENES 401

Callousness of the Russians; departure of Stoessel; strange manners; a kind Providence; the triumphal entry; the review; the 9th Division; the Russian warships; the invocation; the salute; the farewell luncheon; the subalterns.

XXVII. THE FALLEN FORTRESS 427

A holiday; gruesome sights; the Russian howitzers; Nakamura's column; Isusan; the harbour; the blockade; the *Pobieda;* the *Retvizan;* the *Sevastopol.*

XXVIII. STOESSEL AND SURRENDER 448

Russian valour; Stoessel's position; the Russian fleet; Stoessel's decision; reasons for further resistance; the strength of the garrison; the food-supply; a divided garrison; Kondrachenko; the lost opportunity.

CONCLUSION 468

Fatal neglect of Port Arthur; obsolete warfare; spoils of Port Arthur; lessons of the siege; a studious army; a miserable existence; supremacy of the Japanese; national life of Japan; a nerveless race; a cheerful people; our national deterioration; volunteers; conscription; future of the Japanese army; the next generation; finis.

APPENDIX 500

INDEX 508

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

GENERAL BARON NOGI, TAKEN ON THE MORNING OF THE CAPITULATION *Frontispiece*

ADMIRAL TOGO SITTING IN HIS CABIN ON BOARD THE *MIKASA* AT THE BASE OF THE JAPANESE FLEET AMONG THE ELLIOTT ISLANDS 65

JAPANESE SOLDIERS DRAGGING ONE OF THE 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZERS TO THE FRONT 103

GENERAL NOGI SUPERINTENDING THE MOUNTING OF THE 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZERS AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 9TH DIVISION 113

A 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZER, SHOWING THE METHOD OF LOADING . 157

JAPANESE SOLDIERS DRAGGING UP AMMUNITION TO THEIR BATTERIES ON THE HAND-RAILWAY 169

TWO OF THE 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZERS NEAR THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 9TH DIVISION 171

203 METRE HILL AFTER ITS CAPTURE: SHOWING THE JAPANESE SAPS UP THE WEST FACE, AND SOLDIERS COLLECTING THE DEAD . 307

INSIDE THE UPPER RUSSIAN TRENCH-LINE ON 203 METRE HILL, SHOWING JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN DEAD AFTER THE CAPTURE OF THE HILL 321

203 METRE HILL AFTER ITS CAPTURE, SHOWING THE DEAD JAPANESE SOLDIERS LYING NEAR THE SUMMIT, AND MEN FROM THE REGIMENTS ENDEAVOURING TO IDENTIFY THEIR COMRADES . . 329

THE DEAD LAID OUT AT THE FOOT OF 203 METRE HILL, AFTER HAVING BEEN IDENTIFIED, TO AWAIT CREMATION . . . 333

THE NORTH KEIKWANSAN FORT, CAPTURED DECEMBER 18, 1904 . 347

The cross marks the spot where General Kondrachenko was killed.

THE DITCH AND ESCARPMENT OF FORT NIRUSAN . . . 359

THE FORT OF SHOJUSAN, CAPTURED DECEMBER 31, 1904 . . 365

X^1 marks the position of the mine under the escarpment.
X^2 marks the position of the mine under the centre of the fort.
Marked on the photograph are the western group of forts, showing their relative position to one another.

THE CAPITULATION, JANUARY 2, 1905 385

THE HEAD OF NOGI'S ESCORT AND THE HEAD OF STOESSEL'S ESCORT WALKING ABOUT ARM IN ARM 399

RUSSIAN SENTRIES HOLDING THEIR LAST WATCH ON THE COVERING FORT OF SHOJUSAN, JANUARY 2, 1905 401

GENERAL STOESSEL SAYING GOOD-BYE TO GENERAL IJICHI, NOGI'S CHIEF OF STAFF, AT CHORASHI STATION 407

RUSSIAN HOWITZER AFTER ITS CAPTURE, SHOWING THE DEAD GUNNERS LYING ROUND THE FOOT OF THE GUN 433

THE *RETVIZAN*, *POLTAVA*, AND *PERESVIET* SUNK IN THE HARBOUR . 441

Photographs by Messrs Underwood & Underwood.

A JAPANESE SAP FULL OF SOLDIERS CLOSE UP TO THE RUSSIAN LINES 181

THE HALF DESTROYED CAPONIERE GALLERIES OF THE NORTH KEIKWANSAN FORT, SHOWING THE JAPANESE IN POSSESSION . . 233

A RUSSIAN WORK CAPTURED BY THE JAPANESE AND RECAPTURED BY THE RUSSIANS 281

THE RESULT OF THE CAPTURE OF 203 METRE HILL—THE RUSSIAN CRUISER *PALLADA* STRUCK BY A 28-CENTIMETRE SHELL AS SHE LAY AT ANCHOR IN THE HARBOUR 335

MAPS AND PLANS—

PLAN OF THE NORTH KEIKWANSAN FORT 232

PLAN OF FORT NIRUSAN 240

THE LIAUTUNG PENINSULA . . . . . *At end*

PORT ARTHUR . . . . . "

THE SIEGE AND CAPITULATION OF PORT ARTHUR.

CHAPTER I.

THE CAUSE OF THE WAR.

On the 17th of April 1895 the Liautung Peninsula changed ownership. Up to then it had formed part of the territory of the Chinese Empire, but on that date it was ceded to Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki, concluded at the close of the China-Japan War between the Marquis Ito and Li-Hung-Chang.

Of all the clauses of the Treaty of Shimonoseki this was by far the most important to Japan, for it gave her the foothold in Asia which she had so long desired, and formed a gateway through which her immense and ever-increasing population could enter the vast field of commercial competition in China. The territory of Japan is very limited, and it is said that only one-fifteenth of it is cultivable, on account of the mountainous nature of the country. In consequence, for many years before the outbreak of the war with China, Japanese statesmen had realised the necessity of trans-

planting their surplus population to the mainland of Asia, if Japan was to take her place in the comity of nations as a world Power. It is easy, therefore, to understand what importance Japan attached to this clause in the Treaty, which ceded the Liautung Peninsula and gave her the longed-for location on the mainland of Asia.

The Liautung Peninsula is remarkable in many ways: it possesses commercial and strategical advantages the importance of which cannot be over-estimated, and was especially patent at a time when China was on the verge of partition and Europe was eagerly coveting the outlying portions of her Empire. From the neck at Nanshan to the fortifications round Port Arthur, the peninsula is a natural fortress, and can be rendered perfectly impregnable by the skill of the engineer. The country is very mountainous, but these mountains, with one or two notable exceptions, run in no regular chain of formation: rather it seems as if Nature had taken a delight in dumping them down wherever her capricious fancy willed. The soil is soft and sandy, and broken up into innumerable watercourses by the freshets from the mountains during the rainy season. In summer when these rivulets are dry, the mud is baked hard by the sun; and thus the flat country between the hills becomes a network of nullahs and dongas which render it almost impossible to ride over, if you happen to stray from the highway. The roads are execrable: in the rainy season they are rivers of mud, and when dry assume the formation left by the countless tracks impressed when the ground was soft. The whole country is very densely populated by the Chinese, and is dotted everywhere with farms and villages. Every

square inch of the soil is under cultivation, the chief crop being maize. The land has been under the plough for such countless generations, and the same crops have been grown on it for so many years in succession,—for apparently the Chinaman, consummate farmer though he be, has no idea of rotation,—that the ground is now suffering from a premature old age, the soil is poor and unproductive, and it can only be rendered fruitful by the most rigid care and plentiful fertilisation. In such kind of cultivation the Chinaman is a past-master; so year after year the soil of Liau-tung continues to support a dense population of hard-working, peaceful, agricultural people.

The value of the peninsula, however, is not to be measured by its agricultural possibilities: its chief importance is derived from its geographical situation close to the capital of the Chinese Empire, and from its splendid natural harbours and fortress. Port Arthur is the great prize that goes with the peninsula, and but for Port Arthur there would probably be no keen competition for the adjacent country. It affords a fine natural harbour and fortress, that would be desired by any nation anxious to make its position secure on the mainland of Asia. No doubt it succumbed in one day, ten years ago, to the assault of Marshal Oyama and his troops; but that day's fighting was absolutely no criterion of the strength of the fortress, if held not by the feeble Chinese but by a great military Power. Long before the war with China the Japanese had realised the immense importance of Port Arthur, and they were determined to possess it at all costs. The Treaty of Shimonoseki gave them the well-earned prize; but they were destined on that occasion to enjoy it only for a very short time.

Another Power had also realised the importance of the Liautung Peninsula, and determined to prevent its occupation by Japan. Ever since 1891 the Siberian Railway had been slowly but surely creeping across Asia, and already the eyes of Russia's statesmen were eagerly scanning the shores of the Pacific for a suitable port to connect this vast enterprise with the outer world. The northern branch of the line ended at Vladivostok; but it had been decided to construct a southern branch from Harbin, running through the fertile plains of Manchuria, with a terminus somewhere on the Gulf of Pechili. Vladivostok is ice-bound through the winter, a fact which largely discounts its value. What Russia sought for was a port open all the year round to the commerce of the world, and this was absolutely necessary if the new line was to be made a paying concern. As was almost bound to be the case, Port Arthur was the point she fixed upon as the seaboard base of the Southern China Railway on the Pacific. It offered all the advantages already named, and no more suitable spot could have been chosen. Russia kept her plans dark. At the outbreak of the war between China and Japan she was not in a position to show her hand, the railway was not nearly completed, and she could not then enforce her demands against the will of China and the open hostility of Japan.

What must have been the feelings of Russia's statesmen when the clause of the Treaty of Shimonoseki relating to the Liautung Peninsula became known? Their vision of one day acquiring the peninsula, with its fortress and two fine harbours, must vanish for ever unless something could be done to upset the Treaty. Before the railway could be completed Port Arthur

would have been for years in the hands of the people who had just shown to the world, in the China-Japan war, an example of military and naval prowess quite beyond anything the European had suspected possible of the Oriental. Russia was equal to the occasion. Although by herself she was not then in a position to force the Japanese to evacuate the Liautung Peninsula, a combination of the Powers could no doubt do so: at any rate the experiment was worth trying. Eight days after the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki a joint note was presented to Japan, protesting against her occupation of Chinese territory. Japan looked round in vain for assistance. The one Power whose support might have saved her in this crisis, and whose interference might have changed the entire history of the Far East for the subsequent ten years, was suffering from one of its periodical attacks of shivering at the mere idea of intervention in world politics. The golden opportunity was allowed to slip. Japan was forced to evacuate the Liautung Peninsula, which for two short years again passed under the effete administration of the government of Pekin.

From the presentation of this joint note by Germany, France, and Russia, the birth of the recent struggle in the Far East is to be dated. There could only be one meaning to that protest from the Powers, and Japan interpreted that meaning correctly. Russia coveted for her own use what Japan had acquired by right of conquest; and, not then in a position to seize the prize herself, she could at least, with the aid of her friends, prevent Japan stepping in before her. The Powers had been forced to show their hand somewhat too early in the game, and from that moment the situation was perfectly clear as far as

Japan was concerned. Their attitude clearly showed that they recognised no right on the part of Japan to play a *rôle* on the mainland of Asia. The Japanese were to remain bottled up in their countless islands. Japan might remain a source of delight to the visitor and lover of the artistic, but no longer a cause of concern to the would-be plunderers of the Celestial Empire, who, having removed her for ever from the scene of their prospective triumphs, were calmly prepared to carry on the game of partition amongst themselves.

Japan saw looming large and sinister before her the coming life or death struggle, which must decide once for all the question of her future in Asia. There being no escape from this situation, she set about making her preparations accordingly. The lesson she had learnt was a hard but salutary one — not to attempt to pose as a world Power until the voices of her statesmen could be backed by a powerful fleet and a still more powerful army. The Japanese retired once more to their islands, there to prepare, unobserved by the world, for the inevitable struggle. For ten years they drilled and drilled and drilled. For ten years they spent every available yen on warships. The result of this ten years of preparation is now a matter of history.

Before the crisis arrived, still greater trials were to steel the heart of this island people for the coming struggle. Japan had evacuated the Liautung Peninsula in deference to the forcibly expressed views of the Powers on the importance of maintaining the integrity of China. Two years later Russia completely threw off her mask, and with a brutal cynicism unparalleled in modern history, stepped forward and

occupied the very territory she had forced Japan to evacuate two years previously. It was the occupation of Kiao-Chau by Germany which gave Russia her desired excuse. On December 18, 1897, the Russian fleet, headed by the *Rurik*, steamed into the harbour of Port Arthur and formally took possession of the town. Japan was then in no position to protest. She could only hasten her preparations, and wait in patience the day of inevitable retribution. England contented herself with an assurance from Russia that Port Arthur should remain an open port, an assurance which was repudiated almost as soon as it was made. Russia threw up fortifications on all the hills surrounding the town, and from December 18, 1897, to January 1, 1905, remained in possession of the fortress.

The *Rurik*, which headed the Russian fleet into the harbour, lies sunk at the bottom of the ocean. The Rising Sun once more floats over the ruined fortifications of Port Arthur, and it will be my endeavour in the following pages to describe the mighty struggle which led to this remarkable transformation.

CHAPTER II.

DALNY.

Putting aside all question of international ethics, the observer cannot fail to be struck with admiration for what Russia has accomplished in the Far East in so short a space of time. Where eight years ago she found nothing but wretched Chinese villages and filthy homesteads, she has left a railway, a powerful fortress complete with docks, arsenals, and forts, and also a commercial port and seaside resort in Dalny. Port Arthur itself could never be made an attractive residence for Russians exiled by force of circumstances to the Far East. It is small and dirty, and built in a hollow surrounded by hills; the country around is unattractive and inhospitable; and the port is not large enough to hold many vessels. Therefore, in view of the expected increase of commerce from the opening up of China, Manchuria, and Siberia by the completion of the Southern China Railway, it became necessary to look round for some other site upon which to build a suitable commercial port and a desirable residence for the Russian settlers and the officers of the army and navy. A position was found on the shores of the Bay of Talienwan; and where less than five years ago there was nothing to be seen except

a few miserable Chinese houses, the flourishing little port and town of Dalny now stands as a melancholy monument, marking the high-water line of Russian civilisation and progress in the Far East. A branch line was run from Dalny to Nankwanling, thus connecting the town with the railway and Port Arthur. Looking at what Russian pioneers accomplished, in building a modern city out of a wilderness, it is possible to realise the magnitude of the stake for which Russia has been contending, and the feelings of despair which must animate her statesmen when they see that their long-cherished schemes of eastern dominion, conceived by Alexander III., have slipped from their grasp.

The architect who designed Dalny may well be proud of his work. A picturesque town, in a beautiful situation, it nestles on the sea-shore, surrounded by hills; and its fine harbour can hold ships of any size, the deep water extending right up to the land. Millions of roubles were sunk in Dalny by the Russian Government, and by the speculators who unfortunately guided her policy: this money must now be written off as irrevocably lost. Splendid docks and breakwaters protect the harbour from sudden storms, and provide a safe anchorage for the largest vessels in the world. Enormous quantities of solid concrete blocks still show that it was the intention of the Russians to convert more and more of this wasted Chinese soil into profitable land. Charming residences, fitted with every appliance of modern luxury, sprang up everywhere, until Dalny resembled an English seaside resort, with its red brick houses and well-paved walks. Numerous hotels entertained the traveller arriving from the west, and he enjoyed again for the first time, after his two weeks

of just a few words came to him along the telephone connecting Dalny to Nanshan — probably the first case in history in which a battlefield has been connected by telephone to a town. From sunrise to sunset on that eventful 26th of May, the mayor had heard the booming of a hundred cannon and the dull roar of thousands of small arms. He listened at first without any great anxiety: he had visited the ground, and had seen the fortifications thrown up on every hill, the result of the carefully thought out labour of months; and he naturally felt confidence in the ability of his countrymen to hold the position, if need be, for ever. As the day progressed, and the roar of the cannon increased in vehemence instead of subsiding, some little shade of anxiety may perhaps have crossed his mind and affected those who surrounded him; but when at length the telephone bell called him to the tube, at 8 P.M., the mayor expected to hear that the foe had been everywhere repulsed. Instead of this, he received a message of six words—"Evacuate Dalny by twelve to-night." That was all; it contained no information or explanation as to what had happened; it was simply an order, which had to be obeyed, from the General in command.

The news, so stunning in its possibilities, soon spread throughout the town. At first the inhabitants could hardly credit what they had heard, and wandered aimlessly about the streets seeking more reliable information. Their worst fears were confirmed by the instructions issued by the mayor, that every one must be on the road to Port Arthur by 4 A.M. that morning. The message had read "Evacuate Dalny by twelve to-night"; but to carry out these instructions

to the letter was impossible. No one was prepared for such an event; every one believed the position at Nanshan to be impregnable; yet after only twelve hours' fighting the Russians had been routed and were in full retreat. The inhabitants piled their household utensils on every available waggon, or on the trains which were still running to Port Arthur, and, leaving the remainder to the care of the enemy, sought safety in flight. The panic was still further increased by the arrival of stragglers and wounded from the battlefield. As is invariably the case with wounded soldiers, each new-comer brought a worse account of what had happened; the enemy were hard on their heels, their army had been annihilated, the cavalry might be expected at any minute. Wounded soldiers are always under the impression that they belong to the beaten side, and in this case their surmises were only too correct. Presently large numbers of unwounded men began to pass through the town and take the high road to the south, and Dalny waited for no further proof of the great disaster. There was no time to destroy the town completely, but before his departure the mayor gave orders for some of the principal buildings to be set on fire. The post-office was thus destroyed, and several of the private villas.

What must have been the feelings of the mayor as he gazed for the last time on the prosperous town over which he had presided for four years, and which he was never destined to see again. Less than four years before a few Chinese houses had marked the site of Dalny. The fine town hall, bearing the date 1900 in large figures on the front, had been selected as the seat of the municipal government for many

years to come, but in a single day it had passed into the hands of the military authorities of a despised enemy.

After its evacuation by the Russians, and before the Japanese army entered the town and formally took possession of the public buildings, Dalny was for several days in the hands of the Chinese bandits, who were not slow to seize the tempting prize so unexpectedly thrown into their hands. They looted the shops and private houses; they slept in the hotels; and, either through carelessness or purposely, set fire to many of the buildings. Afterwards, when the Japanese came into the town, this horde of ruffians transformed themselves into peaceful traders, and were anxious to sell their loot to the conquerors. All through the siege Russian property was on sale at the numerous Chinese stores, and when the town was first entered the Chinaman was selling the best champagne at ten cents a bottle, under the impression that it was soda-water, and it was only after the unexpected demand for this commodity had aroused the suspicion of the vendors that the price went up.

CHAPTER III.

THE BATTLE OF NANSHAN.

THE battle of Nanshan, which forced the Russians to evacuate Dalny and retire towards Port Arthur, was fought on May 26. The Japanese army which was victorious on that occasion subsequently moved north, and was not the same army which besieged Port Arthur, with the exception of a single division, the 1st, the Tokios. This division after the fight marched south, seized Dalny, and then took up a position facing the Russians and held its ground until the 11th Division arrived from Japan to reinforce it, and the Third Imperial Japanese Army was formed under the command of General Baron Nogi. It was General Oku and the Second Army who fought at Nanshan; but as this battle was fought on the Liautung Peninsula, and the defeated Russian troops were the same as those who subsequently defended Port Arthur, it is necessarily included in the first stage of the campaign which led to the fall of the fortress.

General Oku and his three divisions—the 1st, the Tokios, the 4th, the Osakas, and the 2nd, the Nagoyas—were landed from their transports at Pitzewo on May 6, under the protection of the Japanese fleet.

This operation of landing an entire army within forty miles of the Russian fleet in Port Arthur may be considered a somewhat hazardous undertaking; but with the precautions taken by the Japanese, and the apathy and want of enterprise shown by the Russian torpedo craft throughout the war, and which was already obvious, there was in reality little to be risked. A wooden boom was stretched across from the Elliott Islands, where the Japanese fleet had its base, to the mainland, and under cover of this boom and the guns of the entire fleet, the operation was carried out in perfect safety and with wonderful expedition.

General Oku's first object was to cut the railway to the north, and thus isolate Port Arthur from Newchwang and Liaoyang: this operation was carried out without any difficulty. He then moved his army south towards the walled Chinese city of Kinchau, for the purpose of driving the Russians from the position they had taken up on the narrow neck of the peninsula at Nanshan. As long as the Russians held Nanshan they controlled the entire bay and could use Dalny as a base. On the evening of May 25 the Japanese army occupied a position to the north of Kinchau, which was held by an advanced post of Russians of no great strength. That same evening a night attack was made on the town; but, owing to heavy rain and a violent thunderstorm, the different divisions became inseparably mixed in the darkness, and the attack had to be abandoned.

Early on the morning of the 26th the Russians evacuated Kinchau, which was immediately occupied by the Japanese, who at 10 A.M. took up a position facing that of the Russians, the Osaka Division on the right, the Tokio in the centre, and the Nagoya

on the left. The position occupied by the Russians was on the hills, on the narrow strip of territory which lies between Kinchau Bay on the north-west and Talienwan Bay on the south. Talienwan Bay is here divided into two portions by the little peninsula of Liushutun, the part to the north being called Hand Bay and that to the south Junk Bay. To the west lay the only line of retreat open to the Russians in the event of defeat, namely that along the line of the railway to Nankwanling, and on from there to Dalny and Port Arthur. To the east of the Russian position the Japanese army was drawn up at 10 A.M. on the morning of May 26.

Between the hills occupied by the Russians and Kinchau Bay on the north, there is a strip of flat ground, about half a mile wide at low tide, which leads round to the rear of the Russian position. To the south, between the hills and Hand and Junk Bays, there is another strip of fairly level ground, along which the road and railway from Liushutun to Nankwanling passes. It will be seen that the main object of an attacking force would be to pass round the north of the Russian position and occupy the ground in its rear, thus entirely cutting off the only line of retreat open to the defenders; or else to pass along the narrow strip of flat ground between the hills and Talienwan Bay on the south, and, following the line of the railway, obtain the rear of the Russian position by this route. Both these flanking movements were attempted: the one to the south failed altogether; that to the north partly succeeded, sufficiently in fact to turn a defeat into a victory at the eleventh hour, and to cause the defending force to evacuate the position.

A curious feature of the battle of Nanshan was the part played by the gunboats on either side. The Russian gunboat in Hand Bay almost caused the defeat of the Japanese, while the three Japanese gunboats in Kinchau Bay did actually bring about the defeat of the Russians when all else had failed.

The Japanese had three Divisions engaged at Nanshan, which brought their numbers to between 40,000 and 45,000 men. In addition to their field artillery they had many big guns and the assistance of the three gunboats. According to a report of a captured Russian non-commissioned officer belonging to the 5th Siberian Sharpshooters, the Russian force engaged at Nanshan consisted of four regiments, the 5th, 13th, 14th, and 28th, with reserves, and over fifty guns, many of large calibre, including several 6-inch Krupps. As each Russian regiment consists of three battalions, this would bring their force to at least 11,000 men, allowing for previous losses through sickness and other causes.

The general scheme of the Russian fortifications was as follows. On the flat ground at the foot of the hills trenches were dug as an advanced defence, especially on the east side. All these advanced trenches had to be taken before the Japanese could obtain a footing for the attack on the main position. The latter had hoped to creep close up before daybreak and surprise the position by a rush, but this was frustrated by the advanced works. At the very foot of the hills a second line of trenches, 8 feet deep, was placed, the earth thrown up in front being crowned with a layer of sand-bags. Half-way up the hill was a third line of trenches, not so deep as those in front, but nevertheless a formidable obstacle to an

attacking force, and forming the last line of defence for the defending infantry. On the summit of the hills the ground was cut away square, and the earth thrown up to a height of 8 feet, and strengthened by cross-beams and sand-bags: behind this the big guns were placed. The trenches were connected by covered ways and bomb-proof shelters, while search-lights, mines, and every other assistance that ingenuity could suggest, had been utilised in the defence of this fine natural fortress. And yet, after twelve hours' desperate fighting, the Russians were driven headlong from this carefully chosen position, which had been still more carefully prepared during many months previous to the attack. The fortifications on all the hills were of a semi-permanent character; and it seems perfectly clear that the Russians considered themselves capable of holding the position against any force that could be brought against them. This is borne out by the fact that it was only at 8 P.M. on the night of the battle that the Mayor of Dalny received his orders to evacuate the town.

It had been arranged that the three Japanese gunboats which were to assist the army in their attack should be in Kinchau Bay at 4 A.M. on the 26th, but for some reason they did not turn up until past 9. This delay, and the advanced trenches thrown up by the Russians, postponed the Japanese attack on the main position until past ten o'clock. Under cover of a tremendous artillery fire from the Japanese guns, behind emplacements on a line extending from the north of Hand Bay to a point near Kinchau, at a range varying from 4000 to 7000 yards, the 1st Division made a frontal attack on the trenches on the east of the Russian positions. They

encountered such a reception from the artillery and rifles of the defenders that the attack failed, and the division fell back a short distance. Two companies charging an entrenchment were entirely wiped out, not a man surviving. The division remained in the same position for the rest of the day, at the foot of the hills on the east of the Russian position. It was unable to advance on account of the tremendous fire from the trenches and from the guns on the summit of the hills. Frequent rushes were made by small bodies of devoted men, but these were doomed to failure from the start, and served only to exemplify the almost fanatical character of Japanese courage.

The accurate fire of the Japanese guns had practically silenced the Russian artillery on the hills facing Hand Bay and on those facing the Tokio Division, and it was now the turn of the Nagoya Division to attempt a flanking movement to the south. If only this division could cross the neck of the Liushutun Peninsula and wheel to the right along the line of the railway, they would force their way to the rear of the Russian lines, and the doom of the latter would be sealed. The division, well led, gallantly advanced to the north of Hand Bay; but here it was checked by the terrible fire of the Russian gunboat stationed in the bay. This vessel fired broadside after broadside from her numerous quick-firers—largely augmented for the occasion—into the head of the advancing line, destroying its formation and checking its further advance. Part of the division became separated from the rest and obtained a footing under the slopes of the hills, where they remained isolated. At this time there were three Russian transports in Hand Bay laden with troops ready to land at any moment should a suitable opportunity

occur. Their commander, seeing part of the Nagoya Division isolated, commenced to land his men in their rear, which would have placed the Japanese between two fires. The situation was critical, for if this manœuvre were carried out the Japanese, separated from their comrades, who were unable to advance on account of the fire from the gunboat, could hardly escape annihilation. The situation was saved by the courage and foresight of the commander of the 1st Division, Prince Fushimi, whose men had been lying under any available cover since the failure of their frontal attack at noon. Seeing how necessary it was to check the landing of the Russians before they obtained a firm footing on shore, he launched part of his division against them. These men advanced and quickly drove the Russians back to their vessels, and averted the danger. Shortly afterwards some of the Japanese guns, having silenced the fire of the artillery on the hills, were moved farther south and opened on the gunboat, which was compelled to shift her moorings to the other side of the bay, whence her fire became less effective. Nevertheless, in this part of the field neither side could make any more progress, and the relative positions remained the same during the rest of the day.

The attack on the centre having completely failed, and the flanking movement to the south having almost ended in disaster, the hopes of the Japanese commander rested on the turning movement on the north by the Osaka Division, which had been despatched early in the day to make the attempt. The ground here was more favourable than that over which the Nagoya Division had advanced, and the Japanese at this point had the fire of their own gun-

boats to assist them instead of having that of the enemy opposed to them. On this side there is a steep hill facing north-east, and on this the Russians had placed several big guns, which worried the advance of the division for a short time; but these guns were speedily put out of action by the combined fire of the gunboats and the artillery of the division. The distance between the hill and the sea is greater at this point than on the south, and the Osakas, by wading through the ebb tide, were able to obtain a footing on the flank, and almost in the rear, of the Russian position, even carrying some of the lower entrenchments on the hill itself. Once under the spurs of the hill they were free from artillery fire, but they could advance no farther to the south-west, a battery of Russian quick-firers withdrawn toward Nankwanling checking any farther forward movement.

By this time two of the Japanese gunboats were forced to go farther out on account of the ebb tide, and the Russian artillery reopened from the hill under which the Osaka Division was sheltering. Not being able to depress the muzzles of the guns sufficiently to do any damage to the troops below, they turned their attention to the single remaining gunboat, and managed to inflict some damage on her, killing an officer. The Japanese concentrated the fire of all the guns they could bring to bear on this hill, and again silenced the obstinate Russian gunners. The Osakas once more pressed up the hill, and finally obtained possession of it. It was now seven o'clock; the artillery for the next half-hour poured a hail of shells on the portions of the position still occupied by the defenders, and at 7.30 the order was given for a general assault from all sides. When this final attack was made, half

the Russian position, namely that to the north, may be said to have been in the hands of the Japanese, while the Osaka Division was already pressing to the south to prevent the enemy retiring to Nankwanling. There was therefore no alternative left to the brave defenders but to retreat. At 7.30 the Japanese advanced on all sides; the 1st Division left cover and rushed forward, and the Nagoya Division did the same. The Russians did not wait for the attack, but retreated to the south along the railway to Nankwanling, leaving all their guns and many prisoners in the hands of the Japanese. The Russians halted at a point a little to the south of Nankwanling and made a show of fresh resistance. The 1st Division passed over the battlefield and followed up the enemy, and some desultory firing took place between the outposts.

An after-inspection of the battlefield showed clearly the terrible effect of the Japanese artillery fire. The hills presented the appearance of a rabbit-warren: there was hardly a square yard which did not show a hole where a shell had burst. In places the entrenchments were entirely destroyed and the gun emplacements blown away. This one day's fighting cost the Japanese over 5000 men, while the losses of the Russians were uncertain. A captured Russian non-commissioned officer stated that his company, the 8th of the 5th Siberian Sharpshooters, were stationed in the most advanced trench on the east side, facing the 1st Division. At the commencement of the action they were 250 strong, and in the evening 26 men answered the roll. The same man also said that the 5th Regiment lost 700 killed and 300 wounded. The disproportion is accounted for by the fact that the

wounded could not be carried to the rear, and were hit again and again. It is probable that the total Russian losses numbered considerably over 3000.

Such was the battle of Nanshan,—without doubt one of the most remarkable ever gained under modern conditions of warfare, and of special interest as bearing out what many have maintained, that modern long-range weapons give an attacking force the advantage over a defending one in a well-conducted assault on a well-chosen position. Considering that Nanshan was almost a fortress in itself, it is difficult to account for the Russian defeat. They had had months in which to prepare, and had entrenched themselves up to their necks; but they had overlooked one important fact. The Japanese soldiers, who are trained to use their rifles in deep water, did not hesitate to plunge into the sea, and some swimming, some wading, thus reached the rear of the enemy's position.

CHAPTER IV.

ADVANCE OF THE JAPANESE.

Dalny was occupied by the 1st Division of the Japanese army on June 1. The town was immediately put under military control, the bandits being driven out or shot, and from that day Dalny became the base of the Third Army during the operations against Port Arthur. Meanwhile General Nogi himself had arrived on the scene, accompanied by the 11th Division under Lieutenant-General Tsuchiya, so his force early in June consisted of two divisions. The 1st Division, under Prince Fushimi, was subsequently commanded by Lieutenant-General Matsumura when Prince Fushimi was recalled to be sent on a mission to the United States. This division was composed of two brigades—the 1st Brigade consisting of the 1st and 15th Regiments, commanded by Major-General Yamamoto; and the 2nd Brigade, consisting of the 2nd and 3rd Regiments, under the command of Major-General Nakamura. The 11th Division, under the command of Lieutenant-General Tsuchiya, was composed of the 10th Brigade, consisting of the 12th and 43rd Regiments, and commanded by Major-General Kamiwo; and the 22nd Brigade, consisting of the 22nd and 44th Regiments, under the command

of Major-General Yamanaka. The artillery, field-howitzer batteries, and transport brought General Nogi's army up to a strength of approximately 30,000 men.

With this force General Nogi had to hold a line extending twenty kilometres from seaboard to seaboard, across the Liautung Peninsula from Anshushan in the north, through Motoshogi, to Taitushan in the south. The General himself fixed his headquarters at the village of Pitzewo, near the lake of that name. The entire line was strongly entrenched, and faced that held by the Russians, at a distance varying from three to five kilometres. It is not easy to state accurately the number of the Russians under the command of General Stoessel at the commencement of the campaign; but they consisted of the 4th and 7th Divisions of the Siberian Sharpshooters, and with artillery, transport, and some miscellaneous troops, must have numbered close on 40,000 effective combatants. It has been carefully calculated that the number of persons inside Port Arthur at the commencement of the siege was about 55,000, and the calculation is made on the following basis. There were 24,000 soldiers and sailors who surrendered at the capitulation, and 1300 officers. About 10,000 men were killed in action, or died from wounds or sickness. The Japanese took over some 14,000 sick and wounded; and the remainder are accounted for by the civilians and the 3000 or 4000 Russian labourers who remained in the town, and who were sent back to Russia. Deducting from this total some 10,000 officers and men as representing the strength of the navy, the calculation gives Stoessel, at the commencement of the campaign, close on 40,000 effective com-

batants, of whom possibly some 3000 should be deducted as the result of the battle of Nanshan. It will be seen, therefore, that early in June the Russian forces actually outnumbered those under the command of General Nogi, and as either side might be expected to take the offensive, both had carefully entrenched their positions.

The Liautung Peninsula, as already described, is scattered all over with mountains and hills which take no regular formation, but can be turned into immensely strong defensive positions by the engineer. The Russian army occupied a series of these hills running from Shandtaiko in the north, through the pass of Antsulin (over which the centre road from Dalny to Port Arthur winds its way), to Lao-tsue-shan in the south. Along this line the hills are far more regular, extending in an almost unbroken chain from north to south, as if they had been especially placed by nature for the defence of the peninsula. To the north these hills do not extend quite up to the sea—there is a space between of about half a mile of comparatively flat ground; but deep entrenchments had been dug on this and a wire entanglement placed in front, extending some distance into the sea, to prevent the Japanese slipping round behind the position at low tide, as they did at the battle of Nanshan.

Such was the Russian main line of defence; but they occupied in its front two strong and important positions—the hills of Kensan, 368 metres high, and Witosan, 372 metres high. The strategical value of these two hills was not very great; they did not form part of the main Russian line of defence, but stood out some way in front of it; nevertheless they possessed an importance of their own, on account of the fact that

from the summit of Kensan it was possible to see all that was going on in Dalny and the movements of the troops in the neighbourhood of the town. On the other hand, if Kensan were occupied by the Japanese it would be possible for them to see what was going on in the neighbourhood of Port Arthur.

For nearly a month the two armies faced one another without any important movement taking place; but almost daily skirmishes occurred between the outposts amid the hills and valleys along the twenty miles of front. In the latter part of June the Japanese commenced to clear the Bay of Talienwan of the mines which the Russians had laid. It was important that they should occupy Kensan and Witosan as observation posts, for directly the bay was sufficiently clear of mechanical obstructions fresh troops and stores could be sent from Japan. As long as the Russians held these two hills, they would know of the arrival of every reinforcement, and anything in the nature of a surprise would be out of the question.

With only two divisions General Nogi did not feel himself strong enough to attempt to drive the Russians from their main line of defence; but he determined, if possible, to capture these two outlying buffers. On June 26 he issued his orders for the attack on Kensan and Witosan. The 11th Division, under Tsuchiya, marching before daybreak, drove back the Russian outposts, and at 9 A.M. succeeded in occupying Witosan; but Kensan, which is very steep and has no footpath, still remained in the hands of the Russians. At noon Tsuchiya ordered a battalion of the 43rd Regiment, assisted by a battery of mountain-guns, to take the hill by assault. Just as the attack was about to commence the Russian gunboats in Port Arthur came

out and shelled the left flank of the 11th Division: they were, however, forced to retire on the appearance of some Japanese warships. The 43rd Regiment, to which the difficult task of taking Kensan was assigned, carried it out with the greatest gallantry. The ground over which they advanced is very steep and difficult to ascend; but on the other hand this is just the safeguard of an attacking force, on account of the dead ground which protects the approach almost up to the summit of the hill. The Staff, who were watching the attack from captured Witosan, were loud in their praises of the infantry, especially when two mines, exploding in their midst, did not for one moment check their advance. At 3 P.M. the Russians brought four field-guns into action; but these were silenced by shrapnel after only four rounds had been fired. The summit of the mountain is very small and narrow, and was defended by two infantry battalions; but at 5 P.M. the waving of flags and loud shouts of "Banzai!" announced that the hill had been won. The loss sustained by the 43rd Regiment in taking the position was 150 killed and wounded—not a high price to pay for so great an achievement. The loss of the Russians was uncertain.

The effect of the capture of Kensan was to bring the left wing of the Japanese line forward, so that, while the right still rested on its old position at Anshushan, the centre occupied Kensan, and the southern extremity was pushed forward to the hill of Sechoshan. A very considerable advance had therefore been made in the direction of Port Arthur; and should the enemy's right wing be pierced by the left wing of the Japanese, his northern force would stand considerable risk of being cut off. The Russian

torpedo-boats had long been accustomed to lie at anchor in the little harbour of Shaopingtau; but this was no longer tenable, and was taken possession of by the Japanese.

After its loss the Russians apparently placed immense importance on Kensan; at any rate, Stoessel determined to re-take it at all costs. A week later, on July 3, an entire division of the Russian army, the 7th, attacked the left wing of the Japanese line. Everything was done to stimulate the men; machine-guns were placed in the front line; and the solid Muscovite infantry were moved by the stirring airs of the massed regimental bands. This attack was repulsed after the two lines had approached to within eight hundred metres of one another. The same night the Russians again attacked on all sides. They accomplished the almost incredible feat, for which they are given the greatest praise by their opponents, of creeping up the steep slopes of Kensan unobserved, and getting close up to the trenches before they were discovered. Desperate hand-to-hand fighting took place in the trenches, and swords, bayonets, clubbed rifles, and even stones, were freely used by both sides. For some time the issue of this sanguinary combat remained in doubt; but the Japanese had the advantage of fighting behind well-made entrenchments, and finally drove the enemy helter-skelter down the hill. On July 4 the attack was again renewed, but once more repulsed. Then General Stoessel, seeing that any further attempt on Kensan was useless, withdrew his force to the hills facing the mountain, on which his engineers had been busy for months erecting works of enormous strength. The loss of the Russians in this series of engagements was put at about 500 men, while

that of the Japanese, for the first time on the defensive, was only 300.

The position now occupied by the Russians stretched along the chain of hills and mountains, which, as I have already said, seemed placed across the peninsula for the express purpose of protecting Port Arthur. They rise in some places to a height of 1300 feet, extending from Shandtaiko in the north, through Antsulin—a pass over which the centre road winds its way to Port Arthur—to Lao-tsue-shan in the south. From July 5 to July 26 the Russians remained in this position unmolested, except for the ceaseless skirmishes between the opposing outpost lines, and they had all this time in which to complete their fortifications and render the surrounding hills veritable fortresses.

General Nogi was not in sufficient force to attempt an attack on this main position until reinforcements reached him from Japan. He therefore contented himself with keeping up a vigorous observation from Kensan and Witosan, while his soldiers harassed the enemy in numerous affairs of outposts. The war for the time being assumed an almost guerilla aspect, on account of the small number of troops and the large extent of country to be covered.

The work of clearing the Bay of Talienwan of the numerous mines placed there by the Russians had proceeded somewhat slowly and not without disaster to the Japanese; but in the middle of July a passage was sufficiently opened to allow ships to approach Dalny. This greatly simplified matters for General Nogi, as he could now use Dalny as his base; large quantities of stores were accumulated there, and large reinforcements began to arrive from Japan about

the middle of the month. The latter consisted of one entire division, the 9th, and two independent infantry brigades—composed of the Kobi or Reserve Infantry. The 9th Division, commanded by Lieutenant-General Baron Oshima, was composed of the 6th Brigade, consisting of the 7th and 35th Regiments, under the command of Major-General Ichinohe, and the 18th Brigade, consisting of the 19th and 36th Regiments, under the command of Major-General Hirasa. The 1st Kobi Brigade (Reserves Tokios) consisted of the 1st, 15th, and 16th Regiments, under Major-General Takinouchi. The 4th Kobi Brigade (Reserves Osakas) consisted of the 8th, 9th, and 38th Regiments, under Major-General Tomogasu. General Nogi's army was therefore brought up to a strength of four and a half divisions, or about 60,000 men, by the third week in July, and he was once more in a position to assume the offensive.

The position which the Mikado's soldiers advanced to attack on July 26 was probably one of the strongest ever assaulted by infantry. To take such a position after only two days' fighting was certainly a magnificent achievement; but with all respect to the brave foot-soldiers, it is no derogation to them to say that it was the artillery fire which really gained the day. Without its powerful assistance the Russians would never have been driven from their positions on the mountains, even though the lower trenches on some of the hills were taken by the infantry. The Japanese infantry advanced all along the line of their extended front, with the 1st Division on the right, the 9th in the centre, and the 11th forming the left wing and resting on the south coast of the peninsula. The first attack on July 26 failed absolutely: it was very foggy when the Japanese commenced their advance, and frequent

showers of rain caused the firing to cease at times altogether. Between 9 and 10 A.M. the artillery of both armies came into action. During the day the Japanese infantry made steady if somewhat slow progress, and by the evening had crept close up to the foot of the hills on which the Russians were entrenched. That night an attack was made all along the line, but was everywhere repulsed, not a foot more ground being gained anywhere.

The morning of July 27 opened fine and clear. The artillery on both sides, taking advantage of the good light, began a fierce bombardment. The Japanese concentrated their fire on the high mountain called Ojikeishan, which rises to a height of over 1300 feet, to the north of the pass of Antsulin. No hill probably has ever had concentrated on it a more terrible artillery fire. It is easy to see how severely the Russian infantry must have suffered from this fire, in spite of the most elaborate entrenchments. On the summits of the hills on either side of the pass the shrapnel bullets lay as thick as peas. They averaged dozens to the square foot, and from any spot an empty shell could be filled with the bullets within arm's reach. Glancing down the slopes, the successive shell holes showed how the Japanese gunners had gradually picked up the range, until they had plumped shot after shot right on to the top of the entrenchments, carrying them away and destroying many of the crouching marksmen behind.

In the afternoon the Japanese began to climb the lower slopes of the mountain of Ojikeishan, which are very steep and much exposed. The Russians dared not show their heads above the breastwork, for the hail of shrapnel never for a moment ceased. The first

entrenchments reached, desperate hand-to-hand fighting took place for their possession. The Russian infantry, in spite of the heroic exertions of their officers, were driven back up the hill to the trenches on the summit, and from these not even the artillery fire of all the guns could dislodge them. At 3 P.M. the Rising Sun was floating over the first line of trenches on the lower slopes of Ojikeishan. The soldiers of both sides at one time became so intermingled that there was no room for firing, and they were compelled to have recourse to bayonets and clubbed rifles. An infantry lieutenant jumping into a trench full of Russians was severely wounded by a rock hurled at him by one of his adversaries. In some parts of the mountain the sides are so perpendicular that the Japanese obtained cover by standing with their backs to the rock and firing their rifles over their heads. The Russians, finding they could not reach them while in this position, lowered ropes and endeavoured to lasso individual soldiers, and then to dispose of them when dragged from cover. One Russian soldier in his exertions was dragged over the top by his own rope, breaking both his legs. All along the line this novel form of fighting took place. A thousand little incidents of individual resourcefulness and courage, which will never be known except to the participants, stamped the day as one of the most peculiar in the history of modern warfare. After the capture of the lower slopes of Ojikeishan, the Japanese could make no further progress in this part of the field: the firing continued until nightfall, but the relative positions of both sides remained unchanged.

It is now time to turn to the 11th Division advancing on the left, and follow their fortunes on this eventful

day. This division made two separate attacks—one in the afternoon, the other just at nightfall. The first attack failed; some ground was gained, but no real advantage was obtained. Nor was the attack in the evening successful; but on this occasion the troops maintained their position on the lower spurs of the hills, in the same manner as their comrades had done on the right. During the night a battalion commander, taking two companies, managed to pierce the Russian line and obtain a lodgment in their midst. This turned a reverse into a victory, for, although no further progress was made that night, at 9 A.M. on the morning of the 28th the Russians, finding their right pierced and fearing that their left might be cut off by a farther advance of the enemy along the sea-shore, decided to abandon their whole line and to retreat while there was yet time.

Very slowly and sullenly the stubborn infantry, carrying their dead and wounded, and without the least sign of disorder or demoralisation, left the entrenchments on Ojikeishan and Antsulin and retreated towards Port Arthur, finally taking up a more enclosed position, with their right resting on Taikosan, their centre on Hoshsan, and their left at Nytonsu. This new line was at right angles to the one just evacuated, and extended from east to west, whereas the former positions defended by the Russians had stretched from north to south. The evacuation was a difficult task, and unless conducted with great skill might have ended in disaster, for it will be seen that the left wing and centre of the Russian army had farther to go than their right wing, which rested on the sea-shore. It was therefore necessary for the right to maintain its position until the left and centre had moved back into the

new alignment. The right, resting on Lao-tsue-shan, would therefore have to act as the pivot of the whole line. Unfortunately it was the right of the line which had been pierced on the night of the 27th, and was therefore the least able to maintain its ground: on the other hand, unless it could do so, the retreat of the whole line would be seriously compromised. The Russian commander extricated himself from this awkward predicament with great skill. Behind the hills of Lao-tsue-shan there is a narrow valley, through which runs a little river called the Tai, and behind this again, across the valley, the ground rises into another range of low hills called the Tai-ho heights. The Russian commander therefore withdrew his right across the valley, and took up a new position on the Tai-ho heights. He was now prepared to maintain his ground, and to allow the left and centre of the line to move back while he acted as the pivot of the whole, before falling back to Taikosan.

On the evening of July 28 the main Russian army was safely in its new position—namely, the line from Nytonsu through Hoshsan to Taikosan. Yet, for some reason I have not been able to determine, the force holding Tai-ho did not retreat when the time came for it to move on Taikosan, but obstinately maintained its ground. It was either due to a mistake, or else part of a prearranged plan to allow the rest of the army plenty of time, and to take no risks by a premature withdrawal. The force at Tai-ho therefore became isolated, and the commander of the 11th Division, seeing how matters stood, launched his troops to the attack, at the same time detaching a force to cut off the retreat of the Russians. But the wily Russian would not allow himself to be caught in this trap. If

his retreat was cut off by land, there was still the sea, which remained open : junks were sent round from Port Arthur, and his whole force retreated by sea in safety, while the disappointed Japanese could only gaze from the hills on his lost prey.

In this series of engagements, lasting for three days, from July 26 to 28, the Japanese lost over 4000 men, killed and wounded. The losses of the Russians are unknown, as they carried away all their wounded and the majority of their dead. Considering the strength of their position, and the fact that they acted on the defensive, it is unlikely that they came to more than a quarter of those sustained by the Japanese.

CHAPTER V.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DEFENCES.

1. THE EASTERN SECTION.

We have now arrived at the time when the Russians were about to retire to their permanent line of fortifications. It is therefore desirable to take a general survey of the theatre of operations in which the two armies fought during the next five months, and to examine in some detail the Russian defence works.

Taking our point of view from Port Arthur itself, the natural position from which to examine the map, the defences of Port Arthur run in a semicircle from east to west along a front of nearly twenty miles. They divide themselves naturally into two sections, the eastern and western. Separating the eastern from the western section is a valley about a mile wide, through which the railway and high-road enter the town. The most continuous and severe fighting during the siege took place along the eastern section of the line. The main forts in the west were not attacked: they were merely masked by the Japanese, and left unmolested.

The chain of hills on which the Russian works were constructed varies in height, rising in places to 600 feet. In front a series of foot-hills form almost a double

chain, and both the foot-hills and the main ridge were strongly fortified.

For the purpose of describing the works in detail, I will take them from east to west. Those which were not subjected to direct attack can be passed over quickly, as they are unimportant to remember, and further description than is absolutely necessary will only serve to confuse the mind. It should be understood that the Russian works fell into four different categories: (1) permanent works; (2) semi-permanent works; (3) batteries; (4) the Chinese Wall, connecting all the positions with one another. Of these four, the permanent works, constructed on the latest principles, were by far the most important.

Commencing in the extreme east of the line, which rests on the seaboard, was the fort of Roritsushi, known as the Sea Fort. This position played a double part in the defence, having guns which fired seawards and also landwards. The next three works, forming a group known to the Japanese as the Hakuginsan group, comprised the Old Battery, New Battery, and North Battery, all semi-permanent positions. The four works already named looked due east; and as none of them were attacked during the siege, they can be passed over without further description. The Japanese entrenched themselves comfortably at the foot of the hills on which they were placed, and did nothing more.

The next group of works were the three Keikwansan works; and the first and most easterly of these, Higashi Keikwansan Tonan, was not attacked after the first rush in August. The centre of this group, Higashi Keikwansan, is the first work which needs detailed description, because it was subjected to continuous attack during the siege. The Russian works between

this fort and Shojusan, the last work of the eastern section, bore the brunt of the attack throughout the siege. The distance from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan is about 3900 yards,—not as the crow flies, but following the circle of the positions as they curve outwards towards the Suishien valley. This distance, therefore, would be the extent of front presented to a besieging army sapping up to these positions.

Higashi Keikwansan comes within the category of permanent works. The hill is very steep, and rises to a height of about 400 feet above the Suishien valley. At its foot the Russians had placed their usual wire entanglement, on posts about two feet from the ground. No trench or advance work had been placed at the foot of the hill—the Russians, doubtless, considering that its best protection consisted in the perfect glacis down which they could fire from the work on the crest. Half-way up the glacis was the first trench, which was a continuation of the old Chinese Wall, and from the outside presented the appearance of a shallow earthwork, with sandbags piled up in front. In reality it was of a most formidable character, for the Russians had dug sheer downwards for seven or eight feet, and then constructed bomb-proof shelters, thus providing perfect cover from shell-fire. The top was covered in with logs of wood on which sandbags were piled, and the interior was divided off into sections to localise the effect of the shell-fire. If this work should be stormed in front, the defenders would not find themselves cut off or compelled to retreat up the hill, for they could retire east or west along the retreats provided for that purpose. The summit of the hill had been cut away clear, leaving a low sandy-coloured escarpment, behind which two 5-inch siege guns were

mounted in concrete emplacements, and provided with underground ammunition rooms and bomb-proof shelters. This formidable work cost the Japanese as many lives as any other position throughout the siege. The summit of the hill on which Higashi Keikwansan stands runs back in a plateau for about 100 yards, and at the rear end of this plateau a second work was constructed to command the first, and was mounted with two 6-inch naval guns. This second position was known as R Work. The rear of Higashi Keikwansan was purposely left open, so that if the fort was captured the assaulting party would find themselves at once exposed to the fire of R Work.

On a low hill to the west of Higashi Keikwansan, and separated from it by a distance of 125 yards, was a work called Kobuyama, a semi-permanent structure intended for infantry.

To the west of Kobuyama, and 200 yards from it, was another semi-permanent position called Q Work, constructed for infantry: deep entrenchments had been cut out and roofed in with timber, earth, and sandbags, while loopholes were left at short intervals. The level on which Q Work stood runs back for about 100 yards, and then the hill rises again to form part of the main ridge. On the latter was a position known as N Work. Q Work, like Higashi Keikwansan, was left open in rear, so that it would have been impossible for the Japanese to have retained possession of it without also capturing N Work behind.

To the west of Q Work, at a distance of 400 yards, was the North Keikwansan Fort, also on one of the foot-hills of the main ridge. The next eminence along the main ridge is the mountain of Bodai, and the ground between this and N Work slopes down into a

low neck. North Keikwansan was placed on the low foot-hill in front of this neck to protect it. This was considered one of the most vulnerable points in the line, and North Keikwansan Fort was a very formidable work. It was really an infantry lunette, and mounted no heavy guns, its sole artillery consisting of field-pieces and machine-guns. A plan of the fort accompanies this work, but a few remarks on its construction may be found useful to the general reader.

The fort was nearly triangular in shape, and faced due north,—the north face measuring 30 metres and each side 60 metres. From the bottom of the ditch to the top of the escarpment the height was nearly 50 feet, and above the ground-level the escarpment was constructed of solid concrete. Counterscarp galleries ran along the ditch on the north face, and also extended the whole length of the east face; but on the west face the galleries only extended a short distance. From the counterscarp galleries a fire could be directed at any angle on an attacking force.

The escarpment below the ground-level was almost perpendicular, but the upper portion sloped sufficiently to allow the Japanese soldiers to maintain a foothold on it when they made one of their periodical assaults. Rows of sandbags were piled on the top of the escarpment; there was a banquette for the defenders to stand on to fire over the sandbags, and below the banquette were bomb-proof shelters. Across the interior of the fort was a wire entanglement, and behind this another line of sandbags, so that if the escarpment was captured the defenders could retire to this second line of defence. Behind the second line ladders gave ingress to the solid concrete barrack, which was two storeys high, and covered in on top

with sandbags and loose earth. In the barrack the garrison lived and slept, and there they found complete immunity, at least for a very long time, from the devastating effects of the Japanese shell-fire which smashed up the interior of the work. The arched windows of the barrack, giving it the appearance of the aisle of a cathedral, looked out on a shallow ditch in rear of the fort. This ditch could be swept by the fire of machine-guns in case the besiegers managed to work their way to it. Close to the barrack was the kitchen, also constructed of solid concrete. The ammunition-rooms were underground, and the ammunition was hoisted up by a hand-lift. Behind the fort there was a reservoir, cut out of the ground and built in cement, from which the garrison drew their water-supply.

The communication between the North Keikwansan Fort and the hills behind was very inadequate, and doubtless it was the intention of the Russians to have constructed an underground retreat. The garrison, in order to leave or enter the fort, were obliged to cross the ditch in its rear by a little drawbridge which was exposed to the fire of the besiegers' artillery: reinforcements and supplies, therefore, could only be sent in at night. When the fort was finally captured the bridge had been destroyed by shell-fire, and only twenty-five of the garrison succeeded in making their escape.

On the low neck already described, between N Work and Bodai, which North Keikwansan served to protect, the Russians had constructed another work, known as M Work Battery, on which two 12-centimetre naval guns were mounted.

On the next foot-hill, 150 yards west of North

Keikwansan and in front of Bodai, was another semi-permanent work, P Fort, subsequently called Fort Ichinohe, after the general of that name. The hill on which Fort Ichinohe was constructed runs back about 100 yards on the level, until it commences to rise to the summit of Bodai. Where the rise commences elaborate entrenchments had been dug, forming a continuation of the Chinese Wall. As usual, the front work had been left open in rear; so here again, if an attacking force had obtained possession, the old difficulty of holding the work would have to be faced.

Next in succession to Fort Ichinohe, and only separated from it by a little valley 100 yards in width, was Banrhusan East. If the Russians had possessed a little more foresight, and had realised what the Japanese soldier was capable of doing in attack, they would have placed permanent works similar to North Keikwansan on all the foot-hills, which would have rendered the line practically impregnable. But they were not fully prepared when the storm burst; and therefore Banrhusan East, considering its importance, was inadequately fortified, its summit being crowned with works of only a semi-permanent character.

To the west of Banrhusan East, at a distance of 175 yards, was Banrhusan West, built on almost similar lines to its sister position, and fortified in the same semi-permanent manner.

Between Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West is a valley leading up to the mountain of Bodai, which stands immediately behind Banrhusan East and Fort Ichinohe. This mountain is the highest and most conspicuous object along the whole eastern section

of defence, rising to a height of 625 feet above the sea-level. It acts as the parent position to the two works at its foot. On its rocky summit the Russians had mounted a couple of 6-inch naval guns; but these, being fully exposed, were an excellent mark for the Japanese gunners, who put them out of action at a very early stage in the siege. Towards the west Bodai slopes down to a neck and then rises again to another summit. On the latter the Russians had constructed a semi-permanent work, called H Work, which acted as the parent position to Banrhusan West. On account of having these two summits, Bodai, which in Chinese means "Watcher's Terrace," came to be called by the Japanese "Twin Hill." The neck between the two peaks was strongly entrenched, and crammed with machine-guns pointing down the valley between Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West. Half-way up this valley the old Chinese Wall winds its way, acting as a first line of defence to Bodai if the Banrhusan works should be captured.

Bodai was considered the most important position along the eastern section of the line; because if the besiegers captured it, the town and harbour would be rendered untenable, and the commanding position of the mountain would make it extremely difficult to reinforce the other forts, supposing they were still held by the Russians.

To the west of Banrhusan West, 125 yards farther on, was a semi-permanent work, built on another of the foot-hills, and called by the Japanese Hachimachayama, or the "hill with the towel round its head," by reason of the circular work on its crest. This work was a kind of half-way house to the great fort of Nirusan, the strongest position along the whole eastern section

of the line. On the main line of hills behind Hachimachayama was the semi-permanent work called New Banrhusan, which acted as its parent position. Nirusan had no parent position, for at this point the chain is single. The Russian engineers had therefore provided against this weakness by erecting a fort of immense strength at this point.

In construction, Nirusan was somewhat similar to North Keikwansan. There were no counterscarp galleries, but merely two small caponière chambers at the north-west and north-east angles of the ditch. These were connected by underground retreats to the interior of the fort. The interior of Nirusan differed materially from that of North Keikwansan, for there was a second line of defence constructed of earth and concrete. On this the Russians had mounted several heavy guns, which were very active up to the capture of the fort. The barrack in Nirusan was also an immense improvement on that in North Keikwansan, for it was sunk completely underground, and, in spite of the thousands of shells poured into the position during the siege, escaped undamaged. A stone stairway led down to the barrack from the centre of the fort, starting at a point just behind the gun-line. The windows of the barrack looked into the ditch in rear of the fort, and from the ditch a steel ladder led up to the ground-level and enabled provisions and reinforcements to reach the garrison.

West of Nirusan, 400 yards off, stood Shojusan, the last of the forts along the eastern section of the Russian line. Separating these two positions is a valley which had been protected by barbed wire and mines, in case any protection should be needed; but

so strong were these two forts that as long as they were held it would be quite impossible for an attacking force to pass up this valley. Shojusan was another infantry lunette, and was constructed on lines almost identical to those of North Keikwansan. On the hill immediately behind Shojusan the Russians had constructed a semi-permanent work which was known as the Covering Fort of Shojusan.

The immense difficulties the Japanese had to face in attacking Port Arthur will be understood by even a superficial examination of the map on which the foregoing positions are indicated. It has been shown that, taking the eastern section of forts from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan, the distance between these two positions as the crow flies is 2600 yards, but taking the line of the Japanese parallels drawn round them the distance was 3900 yards. Within this compass were crowded four permanent forts—viz., Higashi Keikwansan, North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan; on the foot-hills six semi-permanent works—viz., Kobuyama, Q Work, Fort Ichinohe, Banrhusan East, Banrhusan West, and Hachimachayama; and on the hills behind, the additional batteries and works of a semi-permanent character—viz., R Work, N Work, M Work, the mountain of Bodai, New Banrhusan, and the protecting fort of Shojusan.

Not one of these positions was isolated; all were linked up by the Chinese Wall, which, forming in places a raised embankment and elsewhere sunk into the hillside, provided a continuous road along which the defenders could pass from one position to another in perfect cover.

The eastern section of the defences is separated from the western section by a low-lying plain, about a mile

in width, through which the highroad and Southern Chinese Railway enter the town. This plain, which is as flat as a billiard-table, was guarded on the east by Fort Shojusan and on the west by Fort Shiyoanchisan. In addition, three lines of entrenchments and wire entanglements were placed across it. Yet another obstacle was to be encountered, a wonderful old-fashioned cheval-de-frise, composed of wooden stakes sharpened to a point, which stretched right across the plain. It was therefore impossible for the Japanese to attempt to pass this way in order to enter the fortress.

2. THE WESTERN SECTION.

A short description of the series of forts on the western side of the valley or plain just mentioned will now be given; but no great detail is necessary, because this portion of the line was merely masked, and not attacked, by the Japanese throughout the siege.

There were four main forts in the western section: Shiyoanchisan, or the "Little Table Mountain"; Daianchisan, or the "Great Table Mountain"; Isusan, or the "Chair Hill"; and Tayanko, or the "Ditch of the Sun."

The first of these positions, Shiyoanchisan, rises to a height of 505 feet, the ground sloping gradually up to the summit. At different points along the lower spurs of this position the Russians had mounted batteries of guns, mostly naval pieces taken off the ships when it was decided that they were not to put to sea again. One of these batteries contained three naval (4·7) guns. Higher up the slope was an old

Chinese mud fort in which were two naval 12-pounders made in Russia in 1879.

The summit of the hill, which is in the shape of the letter L, had nothing in the nature of a modern fort; it had merely been scooped out and filled in with concrete to hold some old-fashioned Krupp guns, which had doubtless been taken from the Chinese in 1895. On one arm of the L were four 6-inch Krupps, two of them dating from 1887 and two from 1877, which had been converted into breech-loaders. On the other arm were two more 6-inch Krupps very solidly mounted on concrete. The Russians had also mounted alongside of them a 6-inch naval gun taken from one of the ships in the harbour, and made in Russia in 1889.

Farther to the west, and a little in front of Shiyoan-chisan, was the celebrated fort of Isusan, or "Chair Hill," the best known of all the positions round Port Arthur, both on account of its peculiar shape and the fact that it was this position that General Nogi's brigade had captured from the Chinese in 1895. Isusan, standing on a lower hill than Shiyoanchisan, was commanded by the guns of the latter. The front of the fort exactly resembled an armchair covered with dirty yellow chintz, which was represented by sand. The fort is very steep, and impossible to climb in front. Near the crest of the hill a shallow ditch had been cut out. Isusan was one of the permanent forts, and contained a barrack of solid concrete and the usual bomb-proof ammunition rooms. Several guns of small calibre were mounted on the fort, including two 12-pounders and twelve 3-pounder naval guns. There was no adequate protection for the guns, and they were continually smashed up by the Japanese fire

during the siege. But as the Russians had a plentiful supply of 3-pounders, they replaced these with others just as soon as they were put out of action. Isusan forms the north-western corner of the fortification of Port Arthur, and its guns can be fired either north or west. It possessed a powerful searchlight, which played a very important part during the siege.

Immediately behind Isusan, and facing due west, was the fort of Daianchisan. This was a permanent structure, and contained eight emplacements for guns; but not all of these were filled. Here, as elsewhere, the Russians had supplied the deficiency in their siege artillery by naval guns from their useless warships.

Still farther west, to the south of Daianchisan, is the large fort of Tayanko, the last of the western section.

To the south of Tayanko a series of entrenched and fortified positions carried on the Russian line to the foot of the Laoteshan heights, but none of these positions were attacked during the siege, and they need not be described.

3. THE OUTLYING WORKS.

Having described the chain of permanent works, divided into the eastern and western sections, which the Russians occupied during the siege, it becomes necessary to examine the ground in their immediate front and the outlying works on it held by the Russians.

At the foot of the chain of hills on which the Russian fortifications were constructed, and running in a semicircle from Shiyoanchisan in the east to the Metre Range in the west, is the Suishien valley.

This valley varies in width from about a mile to two miles and a half. It must not be supposed that it is absolutely flat,—low ridges and hills occurring at intervals, and nullahs and dongas intersecting the surface, provide cover for an army approaching the foot of the Russian positions.

On the north side of the Suishien valley is another chain of hills, running from east to west in a larger eccentric than the chain on which the Russian fortifications were constructed. It would seem as if Nature had constructed the ground for the express purpose of a siege, and had taken a special delight in providing both besiegers and besieged with ideal positions. For while the inner chain lent itself admirably to fortification, among the hills of the outer chain to the north of the valley perfect cover was found for the artillery of a besieging army.

If the Russians had fortified Port Arthur in a proper manner they would have constructed works on this outer chain, and would thus have had two complete lines of defence encircling the fortress. But considerations of time and money had prevented this precaution, and they had no sooner taken up their stand on the outer chain than they were driven back from it in a single day. This chain, which runs from Nytonsu in the west through Hoshsan to Taikosan and Shyokosan in the east, became the Japanese main position throughout the siege. Behind the shelter of these hills they placed their commissariat camps, horse-lines, and hospitals; and there they were perfectly safe from the guns of Port Arthur.

The Southern Chinese Railway, coming from the north across the flat plain from Chorashi, enters the Suishien valley through a gap in the hills; then after

running due south it turns sharp to the west, and passes along the foot of the eastern section of forts; then it again turns south, and entering through the valley which separates the eastern from the western section, reaches the town of Port Arthur. When the Russians abandoned the outer chain of hills in favour of their fortifications on July 31, they still continued to hold the two mountains of Taikosan and Shyokosan, and these positions became their most outlying defences in the east.

From Taikosan a low ridge of hills, from 100 to 150 feet in height, runs west, parallel to the eastern section of forts, almost up to the village of Suishien. This ridge I have named the Divisional Ridge, because during the siege both the 9th and 11th Divisions had their headquarters and permanent camps behind the shelter of it. From this ridge the Japanese advanced their saps against the eastern chain of forts.

At the foot of Nirusan, as will be seen on the map, the Russian line of defence was buttressed out northwards into the Suishien valley up to a small work called Liugen, close to the village of the same name. From the Liugen Work entrenchments carried the Russian line still farther north to Fort Kouropatkin. Eight hundred yards to the west of Fort Kouropatkin is the village of Suishien, which at the commencement of the siege was also held by the Russians. Fort Kouropatkin was connected up to Suishien by a series of entrenchments.

On some rising ground 200 yards to the south of Suishien the Russians had erected four small infantry lunettes, known as A, B, C, and D respectively. These served as an additional protection for the open ground separating the eastern from the western sec-

tions of forts and also guarded Liugen from the west. From these lunettes wire entanglements and entrenchments carried on the Russian line along the low ridge which ran in front of the western section of forts, finally connecting with Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill.

The main object of these outlying works, apart from the fact that they were useful in preventing for a time the approach of the besiegers up to the foot of the permanent line of works, was to protect the water-supply of the garrison. The source of supply was situated at the village of Liugen, where several reservoirs had been constructed by the Russians, the water being conveyed thence in mains into the fortress. It was certainly a weak spot in the defence to have the main source of the water-supply situated outside the line of forts; for when the outlying defences were captured in September the water-supply was cut, and after that time the garrison were obliged to rely on Chinese wells and distilled water.

In addition to these outlying works in the Suishien valley the Russians held many positions on the range of hills running north and south and situated to the west of the western section of forts. This range came to be called the Metre Range, because the various hills were not named but known only by their heights. At the commencement of the siege the Russians held several advanced positions in this range, but they were speedily forced to evacuate all of them, with the exception of the two most southerly hills—Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill.

Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill do not really assist the defence of Port Arthur,—they are rather an embarrassment to its defence. But they command a splendid

view of the interior of the fortress and harbour, and, with the Russian fleet lying at anchor in the latter, it became essential for the defenders to retain these positions. Modern long-range weapons and the telephone have so annihilated space that both these hills came to play a most important part in the siege. Namakoyama is just too far to the north to view the whole harbour from its summit, and therefore after its capture in September the Russian fleet was still able to lie at anchor in the western basin close up to the shore under the care of Paiyuishan. Not so with 203 Metre Hill, for its summit commands a complete view of the whole harbour; and being connected by telephone with the guns of the besiegers, the aim of the gunners could be confirmed or corrected after every shot. The Russians fully realised the importance of holding 203 Metre Hill, and therefore all through the siege they stuck to it with the utmost desperation, and were only driven from it early in December, after fighting of unparalleled severity. Lines of earthworks connected 203 Metre Hill with the western section of defences at Isusan Fort.

The Russian forts were well supplied with artillery: 54 guns of large calibre, including 28-centimetre, 15-centimetre, and 12-centimetre; 149 of medium calibre; and 343 field- and machine-guns were taken over by the Japanese at the capitulation. The guns were either of the Krupp or Canet pattern, and the majority of the fortress guns were out of date. The Russians made a fatal mistake in always mounting them too high up on the hills, where they could be speedily put out of action.

CHAPTER VI.

CAPTURE OF TAIKOSAN AND SHYOKOSAN.

On the morning of July 30 the Russians were holding the chain of hills described in the preceding chapter, extending from Nytonsu in the west, through Hoshsan, to the two hills of Taikosan and Shyokosan in the east. At the point, about one mile to the east of Hoshsan, where the chain is broken, the railway enters the Suishien valley from the low country to the north. On the east of the railway the hills are again continued up to a little river which traverses the chain. Across the valley through which this stream flows, and near the end of the chain as it sweeps round to the south-east, is the mountain of Taikosan, best described by the meaning of the name it bears, the "Great Orphan." In lone solemnity its gaunt figure towers over the surrounding country, looking right over the eastern section of the defences of Port Arthur. From Taikosan the whole of the chain of hills required by a besieging army for its artillery is plainly visible, and the mountain stands in relation to this chain in much the same manner as an old three-decker about to pour a broadside into the stern windows of a frigate much smaller than herself, thus raking her gun-deck. For supposing a besieging army held the line from

Nytonsu to Taikosan, all the guns trained on the forts of Port Arthur would be taken in flank by artillery fire from Taikosan. From the summit of the "Great Orphan" a complete view is obtained of the level plain to the north of the besiegers' lines right away to Louisa Bay in the west; and over this plain every baggage-waggon, every gun, and every soldier must pass on their way to the front. The railway also passes through this plain, so that any train bringing up supplies would be liable to be shelled directly it came in view. If the besieging army attempted to run their saps up to the permanent forts and outworks of Port Arthur, every sap would be enfiladed by the guns on Taikosan. Taikosan is, in fact, the key to the final chain of hills before the permanent line of defence is reached. It is not of much importance to a besieging army, except as an observation station; but as long as the defenders held this mountain, and also Shyokosan, a little farther to the south and nearer the sea-shore, no army could deliver an effective attack on the eastern section of forts.

Taikosan is a high mountain, and extremely steep in its ascents. From the north it is impossible for any one except a skilled mountaineer to climb; on the east the ascent is as difficult; on the west it is also very steep, but on this side the mountain is broken up into many spurs, providing some cover for an attacking force. The south side alone affords anything like an easy ascent. Here the slope is more gentle and the surface more smooth and grassy; but on the other hand there is practically no dead ground to cover the advance. Yet in spite of its difficult ascents, Taikosan is not an easy mountain to defend: it rises to so sharp a point that there is not sufficient room on its

summit to hold an adequate force. The crest is like a razor bent into the shape of the letter L, very stony and rough, and so narrow that it is not even possible to make a trench,—at least, so the Russians had evidently thought, for they had merely relied on the cover provided by the rocks and ledges. In spite of all these difficulties the Russian gunners had managed to get six field-pieces into position on the crest.

To the south of Taikosan is Shyokosan, separated from it by a valley about half a mile wide, through which the south road from Dalny enters the Suishien valley. This mountain is not so high as Taikosan, and its approaches are much more gradual; but, on the other hand, the summit lends itself far more readily to defence than that of Taikosan, being broad and flat and very suitable for entrenchments, while the approaches are quite devoid of cover or dead ground for an attacking force to occupy.

General Nogi having given his troops a day's rest, attacked the Russian line at dawn on the 30th, advancing across the level ground from the pass of Antsulin. He wisely decided that it was better to attack the new Russian position before the enemy had time to turn it into a semi-permanent fortress. The attack was directed against the Russian line extending from a point near Nytonsu, on which the Japanese right advanced, to a point just beyond Hoshsan mountain. By avoiding the right of the Russian line General Nogi was saved from the raking fire of Taikosan, and had the satisfaction of knowing that if he occupied one of the chain of hills between Nytonsu and the railway, it must cause the Russians to abandon the entire line and force them back to the cover of their forts.

His expectations were more than realised: the Russian outposts, surprised at early dawn, fled in confusion, abandoning rifles, haversacks, and coats. This sudden panic seems to have communicated itself to the troops encamped on the hills, for without even a show of resistance they retreated across the Suishien valley into their permanent fortifications. By 12 P.M. on July 30 General Nogi found himself in possession of the whole chain from Nytonsu to the railway, and the Japanese troops, occupying the abandoned Russian camps, saw before them for the first time the goal of their exertions throughout the three previous months.

In spite of this great success General Nogi's position was not altogether a satisfactory one, for he was now placed in the situation I have described of having the three-decker Taikosan on his left flank observing his every movement and pouring a raking fire on his intended gun-emplacements, or among his divisions if they ventured into the Suishien valley. The Russians now held the east and the Japanese the west of the natural chain of hills from which the fortress was to be besieged, and unless the former could be forced to evacuate Taikosan and Shyokosan, the position of the besieging army would be an extremely difficult one.

There can be little doubt that the Japanese Commander-in-Chief at first thought the Russians would abandon these positions after his capture of the right of the line, for eight days elapsed before any attempt was made to take either mountain. In this supposition he was mistaken. For those eight days the Japanese and Russian armies continued to occupy their relative positions. Meanwhile General Nogi was busy bringing up stores, fodder, and guns, arranging for the placing of his hospitals in the surrounding

villages; and during the whole of this period the inconvenience of having the enemy posted in high positions on his left flank became more and more obvious. He therefore came to the determination that before it was practical to make any attempt against the permanent forts the enemy must be driven from these two mountains.

On August 6 an army order was issued from headquarters to General Tsuchiya, the Commander of the 11th Division, to take the two hills, Taikosan and Shyokosan. On August 7 General Tsuchiya issued his divisional orders for the attack. The right brigade of the 11th Division was to advance against the north slope of Taikosan, keeping in touch with the left brigade of the 9th Division, which was in line from Nytonsu through Hoshsan to the railway. The left brigade of the 11th Division was to advance from the coast in the south-east, and to extend on the open ground between Taikosan and Shyokosan. Thus these two brigades, keeping in touch with one another, would converge on the mountain from the north-east and from the south-east.

The commander of the siege batteries ordered Colonel Takahui to take three batteries of 12-centimetre (4·7) guns, and four howitzer batteries of 9-centimetre guns, to be at the disposal of the 11th Division during the engagement. On the low hills to the east of Taikosan the Japanese had placed mountain-batteries, but they were very much exposed to the fire of the Russian guns on Bodai and on Fort Higashi Keikwansan, which were concentrated on these batteries. The heavy guns were, however, so carefully concealed that the Russians were unable to locate them. Those heavy guns had meanwhile completely silenced the fire of the Russian

artillery on Taikosan, which was in an exposed position. The Russian infantry was also driven from the summit of Taikosan by the terrible fire concentrated on the crest of the mountain—the 12-centimetre guns firing shrapnel instead of common shell.

At 7 P.M. Tsuchiya ordered a general attack. The commander of the right brigade deployed the 44th Regiment from the village of Kikukaton; and from that point the line was carried on by the 22nd Regiment up to the north slope of Taikosan. From the open ground between the two mountains, the commander of the left brigade ordered the 3rd battalion of the 12th Regiment to advance towards the south slope of Taikosan, where the more gentle ascent renders it assailable. The 43rd Regiment, keeping in touch with the 12th, was ordered to direct its advance on the eastern slopes of Shyokosan. About 8 P.M. the rain began to descend in torrents, seriously impeding the advance of the Japanese infantry; and at 8.30 the Japanese artillery was obliged to cease fire on account of the rain and darkness. The Russian infantry, which had retired from the summit of Taikosan, reappeared as soon as the artillery ceased firing, and opened fire on the advancing battalions. At 8.30 the Japanese halted for the night on the foot-hills of Taikosan, and constructed entrenchments in an irregular line running from north to east. The 3rd battalion of the 12th Regiment succeeded in taking a salient angle on the east of the mountain, and entrenched themselves there for the night.

The position of the combatants at this time was a curious one. One battalion (the 3rd) of the 12th Regiment had gained a footing just beneath the razor-like summit of Taikosan, and had forced the Russians

to evacuate the crest and fortify themselves some little distance down the reverse side of the mountain. Neither side, therefore, could claim the crest; and as it was impossible to reach their opponents with rifle fire, the soldiers had to find some new kind of weapon. The numerous rocks which covered the surface of Taikosan supplied the necessary want; and, armed with this original ammunition, individual soldiers crept as near the crest of the mountain as was safe, and hurled their missiles over among their opponents. A detachment of the 43rd Regiment had also been successful in occupying a portion of the eastern slopes of Shyokosan, and, entrenching themselves there, remained in possession throughout the night.

The morning of August 8 opened dull and rainy. The Japanese artillery was silent, but the Russians shelled the Japanese lines and inflicted considerable damage. The commander of the 11th Division, Lieutenant-General Tsuchiya, rode out to the left wing accompanied by his staff, to await a suitable opportunity to deliver his final attack. At this stage of the fight an unexpected diversion staved off the inevitable result, and delayed the issue of the engagement until nightfall. At 11.30 A.M. seven warships steamed out of Port Arthur, and, taking up a suitable position, commenced to shell the 43rd Regiment on the eastern slopes of Shyokosan, and also the 12th Regiment holding the southern angle of Taikosan. This bombardment caused deplorable havoc among the infantry exposed on the sides of the two mountains without the slightest cover. The ground after the engagement bore eloquent testimony to the severity of the fire, being ploughed up by the great shells from the warships in such a manner that it seemed almost impos-

sible that any one could have survived. The 12th Regiment in particular suffered so much that it was obliged for the time being to evacuate its position on the southern slopes of Taikosan. The other regiments, however, managed to hold their ground. At 12 P.M. the 9-centimetre howitzers were ordered to concentrate their fire on the warships, and, making excellent practice, finally forced the latter to retire under the shelter of Golden Hill. At 1 P.M. General Nogi himself rode out to the headquarters of the 11th Division to see how things were progressing, and after a brief consultation the order was given to the artillery to reopen fire at 4.30 P.M. At the same time the two brigade commanders were ordered to watch the effect of this bombardment before attempting any further advance. The probable reason for this delay was that General Nogi desired his troops to rest during the heat of the day, and considering a two hours' bombardment would adequately prepare the way, he calculated on taking the position by nightfall. When the artillery recommenced the bombardment at 4.30 the Russian guns on Taikosan did not reply, having evidently been put out of action on the previous day; but the guns from the forts kept up a vigorous bombardment.

At 7 P.M. the long expected order to advance was given to the infantry. The 12th Regiment again attacked Taikosan from the south-east, while part of the 22nd Regiment endeavoured to scale the rugged slopes and broken spurs from the north-west. The feat performed by the 22nd Regiment in climbing the mountain on this side was indeed an extraordinary one. The ascent is at any time a considerable mountaineering achievement, but when opposed to

a stubborn infantry, armed with magazine rifles and machine-guns, it seems almost incredible that the assailants managed to reach the top. For about three-quarters of an hour the Russians defended Taikosan bravely; but exposed to the murderous fire of shrapnel, from which there was no cover on the jagged crest, and attacked on two sides, with the prospect of having their retreat cut off, they began to waver. Finally, at 8.30, they retreated in great confusion, passing down the south-eastern slope and across the kilometre of valley which separates the two mountains from the permanent forts. Taikosan was now in full possession of the Japanese, who took a few prisoners, six field-pieces, and much ammunition.

While the attack on Taikosan was in progress a simultaneous assault was made on Shyokosan from the north-east and east, by part of the 12th Regiment and by the 43rd. As already explained, Shyokosan, although only 400 feet in height, is far easier to defend than Taikosan, on account of the flatness of its summit, on which excellent entrenchments had been erected; and thus, in spite of their utmost exertions, the Japanese were held in check in this quarter during the night of August 8. At dawn on the 9th a rush was made, with the result that the whole mountain was taken except a small portion on the southern side.

As soon as it was known in Port Arthur that these two positions had fallen, the batteries by way of a last protest—or it may have been to fire a funeral salute over the last of these hardly-contested outlying positions—opened a furious bombardment on the captured hills, which caused the Japanese still further casualties.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STRATEGICAL SITUATION ON LAND AND SEA.

In order to understand the reason for the seemingly reckless attempts to rush Port Arthur in the month of August, following the captures of Taikosan and Shyokosan, and having no result except that of inflicting serious loss on the besiegers themselves, it is necessary to look at the whole military position, embracing both Liautung and Manchuria, and also at the naval situation at this period. In the north, the great battle of Liaoyang had not yet been fought. Although the Japanese had been uniformly successful on land in the series of engagements,—generally, it is true, with Russian corps isolated and outnumbered, — the strategical ability of Kouropatkin and the quality and quantity of his army were unknown factors.

If we were to judge from the reports of the Russians themselves, which at this period were full of overweening confidence, only one issue of the coming battle could be expected — namely, a decisive victory for Kouropatkin. It is extremely unlikely that the Japanese General Staff took Kouropatkin at his own valuation, and in all probability they believed they could defeat him whenever they chose to bring on a

ADMIRAL TOGO SITTING IN HIS CABIN ON BOARD THE MIKASA,
AT THE BASE OF THE JAPANESE FLEET AMONG THE ELLIOTT ISLANDS.

general engagement in the north; but it was none the less natural when venturing on an enterprise of this importance that they should desire to have every available man at their command. For this reason they were from the first anxious to get Port Arthur off their hands, in order to be able to hurry General Nogi's four divisions up to the north. By this means, if we are to judge by the light of subsequent events, a complete victory would have been obtained at Liaoyang, and Kouropatkin and his whole force would in all probability have been captured, or so effectually dispersed that the nucleus for another army could not again have rallied on this side of Lake Baikal. For supposing that in September General Nogi's powerful army, which at that time must have amounted to between 60,000 and 70,000 men, had been able to move to the north, the Japanese would have outnumbered the Russians far more than they did at the subsequent battle of Mukden, and neither army would at that time have assumed the unwieldy dimensions which are so hard to handle in the field.

There can be little doubt that as early as June or July the Japanese General Staff reckoned on finishing the war by a *coup-de-main* so sudden and decisive that Russia, unable to rally from the blow, would have been obliged either to make peace, or to form a new army so far to the north-west that Vladivostok would have been cut off and Harbin captured. At no time during the war were Russia's fortunes in such a critical condition as in August 1904: the only question then was whether Kouropatkin could save a portion of his army, or was to be annihilated. The decision did not rest with him, but with General Stoessel and the garrison of Port

Arthur, who even at this early stage had shown superlative qualities in the field by the manner in which they had delayed General Nogi's advance down the Liautung Peninsula. If, then, the Japanese placed such paramount importance on sending every available man to the north to crush Kouropatkin, the question may reasonably be asked, why did they send such a large force to besiege Port Arthur, instead of occupying some advantageous neck of land on the peninsula with a single division, thus preventing General Stoessel and his troops from making a diversion in favour of Kouropatkin?

At this point it is necessary to consider another element in the strategical situation; for the problem to be faced was a twofold one, which might well tax the ingenuity of the General Staff. The second factor in the problem was the position of the Russian fleet. When General Nogi's army arrived before Port Arthur in the early days of August, the Russian squadron, practically intact, and consisting of six battleships as well as cruisers and torpedo craft, was at anchor in the harbour, where they had remained ever since their futile sortie on June 23. Although some of the vessels were damaged, the condition of the squadron was such that it could leave the harbour at any time and put to sea. As a matter of fact, the fleet made its last exit on August 10, intending never to return, but on the following morning they once more put in an appearance, still further battered, and resumed their old anchorage. In all probability, had they not returned, Nogi would have postponed his assault on the fortress, after seeing the immense difficulties his army would have to surmount; or it may be that by that time the General Staff felt they were so far committed to an assault

that they must allow matters to proceed on the lines already laid down.

As long as the Russian fleet remained in the harbour of Port Arthur, the Japanese could not afford to look upon the fortress as a negligible factor in the campaign; for even at this time it was tolerably well known that the Baltic Fleet was coming out to the Far East. They felt with reason that it was absolutely essential to prevent the junction of the two fleets by destroying the vessels in Port Arthur before the advent of Rodjesvensky on the scene of action. Thus early in the course of events is seen that just relation and perfect spirit of co-operation between the two branches of Japan's fighting power, which leads the army to renounce a plan of campaign promising decisive results on land in order that its victories may not afterwards be discounted by having thrown too great a responsibility on the navy.

Unable, therefore, to ignore Port Arthur as a dominant factor in the situation, yet equally loth to defer too long their plan of campaign in the north by the slow process of a regular siege, the Japanese General Staff decided to effect their purpose by an attempt to rush the fortress. This can be the only explanation of a project so contrary to all the recognised rules of warfare, certain to involve such terrible loss of life, and carried out with such reckless bravery that future criticism will hesitate whether to admire or to condemn.

But there are reasons which, if they do not justify, to some extent account for the attempt. First, it must be remembered that it was General Nogi who had captured Port Arthur from the Chinese ten years before, in a single day, with a single brigade.

Secondly, the Japanese went to Port Arthur in complete ignorance of the strength of the garrison and of the character of the defences. Considering both the great repute of their Intelligence Department, and the fact that they had already once been in possession of Port Arthur, nothing is more remarkable than their ignorance during the siege of the topographical features of the ground. Thirdly, there was the popular sentiment which, ever since they had been forced to evacuate the fortress by the Powers in 1895, had made it an article of faith with the Japanese nation to recover the loss. Naturally, therefore, there was great enthusiasm in the army over the undertaking, and this would justify the commander in asking his men to do more than could be expected of ordinary troops. Fourthly, the Japanese soldiers, looking back on their glorious record throughout the war, — a record up to that time without a failure, — might reasonably consider the possibility, and be inspired by the hope, of a yet more brilliant achievement.

The fact remains that an assault on the centre of the eastern section of forts was decided upon. It was carried out with the utmost vigour from August 18 to the morning of August 24. Then, finding that all hope of immediate success had departed, General Nogi recalled his troops within their lines, and a month of waiting followed, while fresh men and guns were being brought up to the front.

Immediately the result of the attempt to rush Port Arthur was communicated to Marshal Oyama and the General Staff of the Manchurian armies, the attack on the Russian positions round Liaoyang was no longer delayed. The Japanese Commander-in-Chief saw clearly that for the present at any rate he must

do without the assistance of General Nogi's four divisions, as any further delay in attacking Kouropatkin would seriously jeopardise the chances of success. The plan of campaign had been slowly but admirably carried out; only one factor was wanting to ensure its complete fulfilment — the presence on the field of battle of another 70,000 veteran troops. The General Staff had calculated on that support, but fate and General Stoessel ordained otherwise. Provided by nature with excellent positions, and by fortune with some of the bravest and most skilful of Russia's military commanders, the General was able to compensate for any shortcomings of his own by the science and devotion of his subordinates. Above all, the gallant and indefatigable Kondrachenko, from the moment of the night attack in February, had devoted himself with assiduous care to the proper fortification of the sadly neglected line of hills, which should have been rendered impregnable years before. Nogi made his daring attempt to break through all obstacles; but on this occasion—the first in the war—even the bravery and self-sacrifice of the Japanese were of no avail. The attack failed, and Nogi was ordered to await the arrival of siege guns and large reinforcements.

It must have been a bitter blow to Oyama and the General Staff in Manchuria to find that their calculations for entrapping the Russian Commander-in-Chief, so carefully worked out for six months, had miscarried. All chance of finishing the war in a blaze of glory had now disappeared; the best they could hope for was to oust him from his entrenched positions and force him farther to the north. The order was given to advance on Liaoyang, and that

great battle was fought with no decisive result. The escape of the Russian army in Manchuria dates from 1 A.M. on the night of August 23, 1904, when the Japanese infantry before Port Arthur were driven with dreadful slaughter from off the mountain of Bodai. The story of this reverse has now to be told.

CHAPTER VIII.

CAPTURE OF BANRHUSAN WORKS.

After the successful occupation of Taikosan and Shyokosan on August 9, there came a lull in the operations for a few days; but on the 13th activities were again resumed. In the extreme west the 1st Division was busy driving the Russians off some of the outlying hills forming the northern extremity of the range which, on account of the hills being known by their height instead of by any particular name, has since been designated the Metre Range. Some very hard fighting took place between August 13 and 15, but finally in the evening of the latter day the Japanese were successful in driving the Russians back and in obtaining a firm foothold on the northern half of the Metre Range. The Russians retreated farther south, taking up a strong position on Namakoyama, 203 Metre Hill, and 174 Metre Hill, which henceforth became their most advanced posts in the west. Meanwhile the siege guns were brought up and placed in position for the opening bombardment, which was to usher in five months of desperate fighting all along the line. At this time the Japanese had no guns of a calibre adequate to inflict serious damage on the permanent forts. It is said—but with what truth I do

not know—that the big guns intended for the siege of Port Arthur were lost in the *Hitachi Maru* when she was sunk by the Vladivostok Squadron in June. This serious disaster set back the entire siege, and delayed until September the arrival of the 28-centimetre howitzers which were sent to take the place of those lost. The sole artillery at the disposal of General Nogi at the commencement of the siege consisted of his field-guns and field-howitzers, some 5-inch siege guns captured from the Russians at the battle of Nanshan, and a number of naval 6-inch and 4·7 guns. The guns were numerous enough, but they were totally wanting in the weight required to inflict serious damage on the modern fortifications which they were called upon to bombard.

The first attack on the Russian positions commenced on the morning of August 19, by the advance of the 11th and 9th Divisions into the Suishien valley from the shelter of the hills behind. These preliminary operations of the Japanese army against the eastern forts were extremely hard to follow, chiefly because so much of the fighting took place at night; and the whole attack resulting in utter failure, the Japanese authorities were more than reticent.

In the afternoon of the 19th the 1st Division, in the west, made a demonstration against 174 Metre Hill and Namakoyama, for the purpose of drawing the attention of the Russians to that quarter, while the real advance was made by the 9th and 11th Divisions. It must be borne in mind that at this time there were no friendly saps running across the Suishien valley enabling the infantry to approach close to the forts in comparative shelter. The advance had to be made across an open plain, and the infantry were obliged to

move with the utmost caution, and to take advantage of every hollow and hillock in the ground, to avoid being annihilated by the artillery and rifle fire. During the 19th a continual stream of men were passing through the Suishien valley and occupying any cover which might enable them to hold their ground in close proximity to that portion of the Russian line chosen for assault. Throughout the day the Japanese batteries concentrated a very heavy fire on all the Russian positions, especially on the two Banrhusan works, and it speedily became obvious that these two positions had been selected for the first attack. During the morning of the 19th the Russian gunners made hardly any reply to the fire of the Japanese artillery, but in the afternoon they became more active, and replied shot for shot to the fire of the Japanese guns. I think very little harm was done on either side, and if anything the Russian gunners, employing bigger ordnance and placed in higher positions, must have had the best of the engagement. Many Japanese officers and men described to me afterwards the horrors attending this preliminary advance across the Suishien valley, with hardly any cover, and in the teeth of the enemy's fire. The casualties throughout this period were very heavy. The advance apparently was made in a kind of spontaneous manner, without any particular order or instruction. Every soldier had but one object in view, to creep as close as possible to the foot of the Banrhusan works and there await the signal to deliver an assault on these positions. Many lost their lives, but more reached their destination. The 9th Division had been brought down under cover of darkness on the 18th to the shelter of the low ridge running parallel to

the Russian position, a vantage-point which provided them with camps throughout the siege. During the 19th the men were dribbled into the Suishien valley to take shelter in the numerous dongas and hollows of the ground. It is said on very good authority that when General Oshima, the commander of the 9th Division, received orders to assault the Banrhusan works, he went himself to General Nogi and begged him not to make the attempt, pointing out that it could only mean the complete annihilation of his troops. General Nogi was inflexible, and General Oshima left him to carry out his orders, declaring that he would obey his general's commands even though he knew it must mean the destruction of his division. Except for some severe fighting in the west for the possession of 174 Metre Hill, August 19 passed without any heavy engagement.

On August 20 the Japanese renewed their bombardment of the Russian positions with great vigour, again concentrating their fire on the two Banrhusan works. The Russian gunners replied to this fire, and, having found the range of some of the batteries, made good practice, killing and wounding many of the gunners, who were carried away as soon as they were hit to the field hospitals in rear of the lines.

At 3 P.M. in the afternoon a tremendous fire was suddenly opened on Fort Kouropatkin. There seemed to be at least a dozen shells bursting over that position at the same time, so severe was the bombardment. A little later khaki-clad figures commenced to spring up from hollows in the ground near the fort and cautiously make their way towards it: they were the Japanese infantry advancing to the attack. This performance was repeated over and over

again. Meanwhile the Russians in this work, having discovered the advance of the infantry, opened a fire on any who exposed themselves, causing the khaki-clad figures to vanish as mysteriously as they had appeared. Presently a point was reached where concealment was no longer possible, and the soldiers had to run singly or in twos and threes across the exposed ground to find shelter on the far side. When a sufficient number had been collected for a final rush, the artillery redoubled its efforts, and the infantry made a dash for the work. As the Japanese reached the wall of sand-bags, the Russians, losing heart, retreated out on the far side. However, they did not remain in possession for long; for the Russians, having received reinforcements, delivered a determined counter-attack, and speedily retook the position. Some of the Russian soldiers, not resting content with having recaptured the work, started in pursuit of the Japanese. Four men, in the excitement of the moment, followed them up for a long way, stopping every two or three yards to kneel down and fire. When the Japanese recovered from their flight they turned, and soon shot three out of four of their daring assailants.

During the day the Japanese siege artillery inflicted great damage on the two Banrhusan works, but finally had to cease firing owing to a shortage of ammunition. During the night of August 20 there was very severe fighting at three points on the line. The 1st Division assaulted, and towards 5 o'clock in the morning carried, the village of Suishien, which up to that time had been held by the Russians, after a hand-to-hand struggle in the streets of the village, which was partly burnt and destroyed by shells. This success forced the Russians to retire to the four redoubts to the south of the

village, which then became their advanced post in that quarter. On the same night, just before dawn, the 9th Division made an unsuccessful attempt to carry the Banrhusan works. Meanwhile, in the third case, the 11th Division made repeated attacks on the Keikwansan forts during the night, but these attempts failed, as they were bound to do, considering the strength of the positions. At 8 A.M. on the morning of the 21st some soldiers of the 11th Division did occupy one of the Keikwansan works for a short time, but were driven out again at 9.30 A.M.

August 21 was a day of preparation. Every Japanese battery opened fire simultaneously, directing their fire on the two Banrhusan works in such a vindictive manner that it soon became evident we might expect a decisive move in that quarter. Between the two Banrhusan forts is a valley—or, to speak more accurately, a cutting or donga—some 200 yards away from the positions, where a number of men could find shelter close up to the Russian positions. During the day a steady stream of men obtained the shelter of this donga, suffering severely from the fire of the Russian forts, but unmolested by the fire of the Russians in Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West, for the defenders of those two works were unable to show their heads for a single moment above cover, on account of the shrapnel and common shell which were bursting above them at the rate of ten or twenty a-minute. On the 21st the 4th Kobi Brigade, the Osakas, were attached to the 9th Division; and this is important to remember, for they afterwards played a leading part in the subsequent repulse of the Japanese attack. The fire of the big guns was kept up throughout the night in a desultory manner by both sides. During the

night of the 21st and the morning of the 22nd, five unsuccessful attempts were made by the 9th Division to take Banrhusan East, but some of the wire round the foot of these works was cut. Towards dawn both sides, worn out by their long vigil, mutually ceased to worry one another, and this allowed the soldiers a few hours' repose before the great fight which was to decide the possession of the Banrhusan works.

On the morning of the 22nd General Nogi, seeing what little success had attended the operations, and having serious misgivings as to the outcome of the attack, sent for the Staff Officers of the 9th and 11th Divisions to consult with him. It is impossible to say what the outcome of this conference would have been; but the decision was postponed by the news sent in three hours later, reaching the conference while it was still sitting, that the fort of Banrhusan East had been assaulted and partially captured by the soldiers of the 7th and 35th Regiments. The Japanese, it was reported, held two-thirds of the work, while the Russians still maintained themselves on a small portion at the back, and a fierce fight was raging with stones and hand-grenades across the wall of sand-bags.

This successful attack on Banrhusan East was an extraordinary performance, and reflects the greatest credit on the 6th Brigade and their gallant commander, Major-General Ichinohe. In spite of the five unsuccessful assaults they had made during the night of the 21st and the morning of the 22nd, the 7th and 35th Regiments again left the cover of the donga and advanced to the attack at 10 A.M. on the morning of the 22nd. It is said that a rumour of the retirement of the Russians from the fort led to this attack. But what a position for troops to assault! Surely no other

people except the Japanese would ever have attempted to storm a redoubt built on the summit of a hill, the slope of which is by no means gentle, and is commanded on all sides by other hills and forts. From the moment they emerged from the shelter of the donga there was not an inch of cover for the Japanese troops, but a perfect glacis down which the defenders could fire. The Dervishes, or some other horde of religious fanatics, might have flung themselves in waves against this hill in a vain effort to reach the crest, but surely no other perfectly disciplined troops, "unanimated by the wild rush of undisciplined valour," would have undertaken such a task in sober earnest —a task opposed to all principles of modern warfare, and which it seemed sheer murder to attempt. The Banrhusan works, only semi-permanent structures, had suffered much damage from the bombardments which preceded the assault, although in August no larger gun could be brought to bear on these works than a 6-inch naval gun; for the great howitzers had not then made their arrival on the scene of action. On the two hills there were no permanent works such as are understood by the modern appellation, but the summits had been dug into numerous trenches and bomb-proof shelters, while rows of sand-bags provided additional cover from the enemy's fire.

The morning of August 22 was fine and clear, an ideal day for watching an attack, and also favourable for first-rate artillery practice. A lull had preceded the coming storm. From daybreak to 10 A.M. hardly a shot was fired by either side, and it almost seemed as if the day would pass without incident, when suddenly the Japanese artillery opened a fire of shrapnel on the Banrhusan works. So fierce and sustained was

this fire that the redoubts speedily became invisible, completely enveloped in clouds of white smoke from the shrapnel, and black smoke lower down, caused by the earth and sand thrown up after each explosion of a common shell. At 10.15 the bombardment suddenly ceased, and the infantry attacked. As a preliminary defence a complete line of wire had been placed around the foot of the hills,—not a single span, but many fastened on stakes. This obstacle had to be cut before any further advance up the slope became practicable. The first soldiers who went forward carried wire-cutters, and with these they endeavoured to sever the strands before being shot. Many were killed, but the wire was eventually cut in several places, which allowed others to pass through and ascend the slope of the hill. The rushes of the infantry were further checked by the fire of the riflemen and maxims placed behind the covered way which connected the Russian positions. The Japanese thus found themselves exposed to a heavy rifle and machine-gun fire from three different directions: from Banrhusan East, their objective; from Banrhusan West, the sister position, which they left almost in their rear; and from the enfilading fire of the covered way. Through this fire-swept zone the 7th and 35th Regiments advanced, regardless of their losses.

Colonel Ouchi, their commander, fell pierced by twenty bullets, and the blood-stained map found on his body was sent to the Emperor as a souvenir of his gallantry. After several attempts to obtain a lodgment on Banrhusan East had failed, an officer and a few men succeeded in occupying a portion of the work, and signalled to their comrades, advancing to reinforce them, the point to make for. More men gradually reached the shelter of the work, and finally sufficient

were gathered together to make a further attack on the Russians still holding the trenches in the rear of the hill. Both sides used the bayonet and stones, and about 2 P.M. the Russians were finally driven out of the entire work, which remained in the hands of the Japanese. Whilst the assault on Banrhusan East was in progress, the soldiers attacking from the donga had suffered much from the fire of the Russians on Banrhusan West. At 3 P.M. two companies of the 7th Regiment, stung beyond endurance by this fire, suddenly turned on their way and delivered an attack on Banrhusan West. This was entirely successful, the Russians, evidently discouraged by the loss of Banrhusan East, making but a feeble resistance, and retreating to the hill behind.

Lieutenant Hori, A.D.C. to General Oshima, the commander of the 9th Division, gave me a vivid description of the confusion and uncertainty prevailing during the day. It was clearly seen from the headquarters of the 9th Division how the 6th Brigade was suffering in their attack on the Banrhusan forts, and nothing was known of the fate of the gallant commander of that brigade, General Ichinohe, who in person had led his troops forward to the assault. General Oshima despatched Hori across the Suishien valley to the foot of these Banrhusan works to find out exactly how matters stood, and also to ascertain the fate of the general. Making his way under the guns of the fortress, and exposed to the fire of the numerous marksmen, Hori at length found himself on the scene of action, where none but dead or wounded soldiers were to be seen. He inquired of the latter if any one had seen the general, but no one seemed to know his whereabouts, many soldiers stating he had

been killed. Hori was on the point of returning to Oshima with this report, when he suddenly came upon the general sitting in a small hole in the ground, in order to obtain some shelter from the incessant rifle and machine-gun fire. The general was alone, deserted by all. His two A.D.C.'s had been killed earlier in the day by a shell which took off the roof of a Chinese farm in which they were standing. His entire command had been destroyed in this desperate assault. The 7th Regiment was reduced to a total of 208 men after the attack, and the 35th to 240 men, the entire 6th Brigade losing in the assault 2100 men. Both regiments had previously lost heavily in the fighting from July 26th to 28th, and after the capture of Banrhusan were practically non-existent until reinforcements reached them from Japan, when the ranks were once more filled up.

There was great rejoicing at the headquarters of the 9th Division when it was heard that Ichinohe was still alive, as every one had given him up for lost, thinking it impossible that he could escape from a field of such dreadful carnage. The gallant Ichinohe refused to return to his headquarters after accomplishing this feat of arms, but insisted on remaining in the captured redoubt in case the Russians should make an effort to regain possession of it. The general's surmise turned out to be correct, for Stoessel evidently made up his mind to regain possession of the position at all costs, and from the night of August 22nd to the night of the 27th the Russians made a series of desperate attempts to regain these two works. Both sides fought with the utmost valour, and several times the Russians were within an ace of accomplishing their purpose, it being only the stimulating presence

of the gallant Ichinohe which prevented the worn-out half-starved Japanese from being driven out. From the time of its capture up to the morning of the 28th Ichinohe never left Banrhusan East. During those days the only food the men and their general could obtain was a few biscuits and a little water, carried across the Suishien valley at night. It was not until the engineers had succeeded in running their trench across the valley and up to the front of the fort that succour could be brought to the hardly-pressed garrison, and only then would the general leave his post for rest and refreshment.

Such was the struggle for the two forts of Banrhusan, and it is surely almost without a parallel in warfare that positions of such immense strength, protected by earthworks, the approaches of which are commanded by the fire of numerous forts, should have been taken in a few hours by soldiers who received no direct order to make the attack, but who anticipated the command of their general.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GREAT NIGHT ATTACK.

On the evening of August 22 there was great jubilation in the camps round Port Arthur: the singing of national songs, and the shouts of "Banzai" rending the air, proclaimed a great success gained that day by the gallant 6th Brigade, which bade fair to lead to a speedy triumph of the Japanese army. Already men had begun to discuss the prospects of a rush to the north to assist their comrades under the old veteran Oyama, who was converging on Liaoyang, and the great prize of the war—Kouropatkin. To onlookers it seemed that things were nearing the end. The capture of Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West, two strong positions right at the foot of what was then believed to be the most vulnerable portion of the Russian line of defence, apparently opened the way for a general assault on the mountain of Bodai immediately behind.

This great attack on Bodai—"The Watcher's Terrace"—which was to settle the fate of Port Arthur by bringing about the fall of the eastern section of the forts, is extremely difficult to describe with anything like perfect accuracy. In the first place, it was made at night; secondly, it ended in a great disaster,

and the Japanese authorities are therefore reticent on the matter; thirdly, the confusion was so great, and the troops became so inseparably mixed in the darkness, that not even the survivors could tell the same story. General Nogi's plan of campaign was simple in the extreme, and left everything to the bravery of his troops and to a certain element of luck which, if it had operated kindly, might have led to a decisive success.

His plan was as follows: the 6th Brigade under Major-General Ichinohe, reinforced for the occasion by the 4th Kobi Brigade, consisting of the 8th, 9th, and 38th Regiments, was to pass up the little valley separating Banrhusan East from Banrhusan West, capture the Chinese Wall, which would be the first obstacle encountered, and then assault Bodai in front, the assault to be directed against that portion of the mountain known as H Work. Simultaneously with this attack the 10th Brigade of the 11th Division, under Major-General Kamiwo, was also to advance up the same valley, and attack the north-east peak of Bodai, which on account of having two peaks is sometimes called by the Japanese "Twin Hill." In other words, if the Chinese Wall held by the Russians was successfully captured, the 6th Brigade was to advance directly up the neck separating Bodai from H Work, while the 10th Brigade, sweeping more to the left, attacked Bodai from the north-east. Such was the plan, possessing a beautiful simplicity, and easy to understand. It meant that some 8000 or 10,000 men were to be launched into a death-trap in the middle of the night, relying on their personal bravery to carry the enterprise through successfully; for after the attack had once commenced it would be impossible to give any further orders in the darkness.

Let us glance for a moment at the configuration of the ground, and the positions of the forts and batteries chosen for assault. The four chief positions to keep in mind while considering this attack are the two Banrhusan forts, Bodai, and H Fort. The distance separating Banrhusan East from Banrhusan West is about 175 yards; the distance separating Bodai from H Fort is about 250 yards; the distance from Banrhusan East to the north-west peak of Bodai is about 450 yards as the crow—or, more appropriately, the bullet—flies; but this latter measurement does not include the steep climb, which naturally renders the distance much greater. The distance separating Banrhusan West from H Fort is about 400 yards. Within this four-sided figure, with sides of 250 to the south, 175 to the north, 450 to the east, and 400 to the west, two brigades of troops, without counting the Russians, whose numbers I do not know, fought on the night of August 23.

The saps across the Suishien valley were at this time hardly commenced. The troops taking part in the attack were brought across the open ground under cover of darkness, and massed either in the captured works of Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West, or just behind them. The regiments which took part in the assault were the 12th and 22nd, forming the 10th Brigade of the 11th Division; the survivors of the 7th and 35th Regiments, forming the 6th Brigade of the 9th Division; and the 8th, 9th, and 38th Regiments, composing the 4th Kobi Brigade. Of these the 8th Regiment was in garrison on Banrhusan West. The part assigned to the 8th was to attack the New Banrhusan work simultaneously with the advance of the other troops on Bodai and H Work,

so that if the 6th Brigade were successful in taking H Work, they would not be driven off again by the fire of the Russians from New Banrhusan, just to the west.

After going over these positions it is hard to find any justification for an attack of this reckless nature, or to see how under any circumstances it could possibly have succeeded. The immense strength of the positions would have appalled an ordinary general, and would have caused him to hesitate before attempting an assault. At the time it was made, it is only fair to say the Japanese had not learnt from bitter experience the strength of the positions they were to attack, or the manner in which the fire of several forts could always be brought to bear on any work chosen for assault. In addition, the troops assaulting Bodai from the north-east would leave unmolested immediately in their rear P Work and the North Keikwansan Fort, so that the soldiers attacking the mountain would be exposed in their rear, at a distance of some 400 yards, to the fire of the garrisons of these works. Supposing the Japanese had succeeded in capturing Bodai and H Fort, it is hard to see how these positions could have been held during daylight. There were no permanent works on either hill to shelter the garrisons from the fire of the marksmen on the surrounding hills, or from the concentrated artillery fire which would have been immediately brought to bear on them. What, then, was in the mind of the Japanese Commander-in-Chief when he ordered the attack, and what result did he hope to obtain from the capture of these two positions? The answer doubtless is, that General Nogi hoped, by capturing Bodai, to force the Russians to evacuate the

whole of the eastern chain of defences. If he could hold this mountain, situated in the very centre of the eastern chain, and commanding the approaches to forts Shojusan, Nirusan, and the Keikwansan group, the task of provisioning and reinforcing these works would have been almost impossible to the Russians. The garrisons in them, cut off from food and water, would have been obliged to capitulate after a few days. Granting that this was the result hoped for, the probabilities were enormously in favour of the besieged forcing the besiegers to evacuate the captured positions by the concentrated fire of the works it was sought to isolate and starve into surrender. The attack, in fact, was based on an entire misunderstanding, not only of the strength of the Russian positions and the number of soldiers in Port Arthur, but also of the spirit of the garrison, which at this time and for some months afterwards showed no signs of demoralisation.

The hasty manner in which the Russians had evacuated their positions on the morning of July 31, with every sign of panic and confusion accompanying their flight to the line of forts, seems to have buoyed up the Japanese General Staff with a belief that a determined attack on some point of the line would be crowned with success. On the other hand, the manner in which the Russians had met the assaults on Taikosan and Shyokosan was certainly not the resistance of demoralised men. It should have warned the Japanese of what might be expected of the enemy when once they found themselves with their backs to the wall, and with no further chance of retreating except into the sea. The enthusiasm of the Japanese soldiers at this time was at its height: during the past three weeks they had won a series of striking

successes, and they were now prepared to follow them up by a determined effort to achieve the main object in view, the capture of the fortress. Nevertheless, giving due consideration to all these facts, I do not think the reckless attack on Bodai and H Fort can possibly be justified under any circumstances.

The fight on the night of August 23 was almost impossible to follow intelligibly. I shall merely describe what I saw, and will supplement it by facts gleaned afterwards.

This was the period when the correspondents before Port Arthur had not acquired that liberty of action which subsequently rendered their stay with General Nogi so agreeable. We were assigned a high mountain called Hoshsan, some two miles and a half away from the centre of the Russian forts. From this vantage-point we had to view the operations of the hostile armies, relying on a series of lectures given by an officer of the General Staff to supply the deficiencies in our information caused by the great distance from which we observed the events. We were never informed of an intended attack, and were obliged to be on the *qui vive* the whole time in order not to miss anything. Thus it happened that on the night of August 23 not a soul in our camp knew of the approaching assault on Bodai, and almost every one was in bed and asleep when the Japanese advanced to the attack.

On this particular night Mr D. J. James, the correspondent of 'The Daily Telegraph,' and myself came to the conclusion that life under such circumstances, with freedom of movement restricted to the bare and lonely summit of a remote mountain, was no longer worth living. We decided to move forward under

cover of the darkness through the Japanese lines, and endeavour to get nearer the front. About 10.30 we left camp, and made our way through the hills leading into the Suishien valley, from which direction the sound of firing had just commenced. Unfortunately the first person we encountered was a Japanese officer on horseback, who inquired who we were and where we were going. Luckily this gentleman, being in a hurry, was satisfied with the explanation, given him in perfect Japanese by my companion, that we were looking for our camp. Our object was to make our way through the picket line and climb some hills in front, which from their position apparently commanded a good view of the scene of operations—viz., the mountain of Bodai, and the two Banrhusan works.

We were afraid of stumbling upon the Japanese outposts, who in the darkness might mistake us for Russians, for at this time the presence of Europeans with the army was not generally known among the Japanese soldiers. By the time we had left the shelter of the hills and entered the Suishien valley it became evident that a big fight was in progress, for the firing had developed into a roar, broken only by the rattle of many machine-guns.

A little hill some way in front seemed to offer the most advantageous point from which to see the engagement. We made towards it, and had climbed half-way to the top when our progress was arrested by what looked like a trench on the summit of the hill. My companion, who was the first to notice this in the darkness, was positive that he saw men sitting with their backs to this trench, but to me they looked merely like heaps of stones. As, how-

ever, he was quite positive, we stopped half-way up the hill, hesitating what to do. It was a question of returning and missing our chance of seeing the fight, of finding some other hill, or of going forward to the picket, who could only be Japanese, and explaining who we were and what we were doing. We fully realised the danger of stumbling upon a sleeping picket in the middle of the night, especially while an engagement was in progress; but we considered it best to walk boldly forward, whistling in a nonchalant manner to attract their attention. Up to this time we had not been seen, having approached from the rear, while the sentries were naturally out in front. Our ill-starred expedition very nearly came to an end, for although we had only twenty yards to go, we had not covered half that distance before the entire picket were on their feet. The men, suddenly aroused from their slumbers, and hearing for the first time the sound of heavy firing, and seeing total strangers approaching them, waited for no further explanation. The corporal was the first to seize his rifle, and calling out "Ruskes" to his comrades, he at once aimed at us. I had seen his hand go back for his rifle, and determined to close with the picket before they had time to fire; so I ran forward calling out "Banzai," the only Japanese word I knew, at the same time endeavouring to seize the nearest soldier by the hand. Unfortunately my motive was misunderstood, and this soldier, half-dazed by sleep, and imagining that some enemy was about to bayonet him in the darkness, lost his balance and rolled over backwards into the trench. I also lost mine, and rolled over after him right amongst the picket, where we remained, a confused and

struggling mass. This was the best thing that could have happened, for the corporal and the sentries, seeing their mark suddenly disappear, refrained from firing. Meanwhile my companion, who was in still greater danger outside the trench, had thrown himself on the ground and kept calling out in Japanese that we were Englishmen and friends. Directly our nationality was discovered, the Japanese soldiers could not do enough to make amends for their mistake. Even then the incident was not finished, for one young soldier, waking up five minutes after all was over, and ashamed of having been out of the fun as he imagined, rushed forward to bayonet any survivors, and had literally to be held back by his companions.

The spectacle in front was truly magnificent, and unique in the annals of war: it will never be forgotten by those who were present on that eventful night. It would be useless for me to attempt to describe the movements of troops, or the actions of individual soldiers in the great night battle. Even the headquarters staff afterwards could not say accurately what had happened. During the entire engagement, which lasted from 10 P.M. to 6 A.M., with the exception of the Japanese gunners I did not see a single soldier on either side. Nevertheless it was possible to follow the course of the battle accurately, both by sound and by sight. We were able to tell the movements of troops, and the ebb and flow of victory or defeat, not by the sight of the troops themselves, but by the continually shifting rays of no less than seven powerful searchlights, and the bursting of innumerable star-shells, which mingled in reckless confusion with the flashes of the rifles and the explosion of the artillery.

The grim outline of the forts was plainly visible as the rays of the searchlights, flitting from side to side, rested for a moment on the hills. The Russians had searchlights on Golden Hill Fort, at the entrance to the harbour, on Higashi Keikwansan, on Nirusan, Shojusan, Shiyoanchisan, and Isusan. There were no assaults made on any of these positions on the night of August 23, so the rays of the searchlights were swung round to the ground in front of Bodai.

The Russians were not content to light up the Suishien valley in this manner; in addition they discharged a continual shower of star-shells over any suspected point where the Japanese might be expected to be advancing. The searchlights and star-shells, together with the bursting of shrapnel and the roar of musketry, and above all the terrifying ra-ta-ta-ta-ta of the Russian machine-guns massed on Bodai, turned the night of August 23 into a perfect Inferno, from which it seemed impossible for any one to escape alive. It was evident from the sound of the firing that the severest fighting was taking place on the slopes of Bodai. This meant that the Japanese had made an assault from the Banrhusan forts. For about half an hour the firing seemed stationary, the sound neither advancing nor retiring. At this point the searchlights were not of so much use, for the angle of the hills protected the Japanese assaulting Bodai from their rays. The lights, unable to assist the infantry, turned their rays on the Japanese artillery positions. Every now and again the flood of light would stop and rest on the hill from which we were watching the engagement. Then the corporal would give an order in Japanese, and each man would fling himself on the ground and not move until

the rays had wandered on to some other point. At one period the light cast on us remained stationary for nearly half an hour, and during the whole of this time we had to lie quiet on the sharp stones for fear of attracting the attention of the gunners.

The picket we had so providentially encountered belonged to the 1st Regiment, whose headquarters were situated in the extreme west; but after the great losses sustained by the 9th Division they had been sent to assist General Oshima, and on this particular night were occupying the outpost line. It was interesting to watch the behaviour of the Japanese while this fight was in progress. The soldiers forgot all about sleep, and gathered round their corporal discussing the situation with him in excited tones: you could see they were anxious about the result, and still more anxious to go forward and assist their comrades. A few hundred yards to our front was another hill, which commanded a better view than the one we were on, although it was somewhat lower; and I desired to go as far as this vantage-point, but the corporal was obdurate, and refused to allow us to move. We then suggested that he should advance his picket, a suggestion which apparently amused him very much, but he replied that it was not possible. The soldiers also begged him to move forward, as they were equally anxious to see what was happening, but the corporal refused their request.

I have never seen such an impressive sight as the Russian searchlights on the night of August 23. The rays of these monsters crept across the Suishien valley and concentrated on any point where the Japanese were massed. The unfortunate soldiers, looking into this sea of light, were quite unable to fire accur-

ately, and at the same time found themselves exposed in full view of their adversaries. This was the first occasion on which the searchlight as a weapon of defence has been used in actual warfare in land operations, and its results excelled the most sanguine expectations. I have been told by survivors that it blots out everything in front, causing the men to wander aimlessly about seeking shelter from this terrible enemy; but all their efforts are in vain, for the rays follow their every movement, and the machine-gun follows the rays.

In the midst of this struggle, which was to decide the fate of Port Arthur, and possibly that of Kouropatkin and the armies of the north, an incident occurred showing the minute organisation of the Japanese army, and how nothing, not even the severest engagements, can throw it out of gear. We were sitting in the trench, gazing at the blaze of light in our front, when the sentry challenged some one approaching from the east. The answer being satisfactory, the stranger was allowed to approach, whereupon two soldiers came up carrying a sack, which was handed to the corporal, who immediately proceeded to open it. In the sack were numerous balls of cooked rice. One of these was taken out and handed to each soldier of the picket, and the corporal insisted on taking two extra balls for my companion and myself. Then, having closed the sack, he again handed it to the soldiers, who passed on to the next picket to the west. Nothing could have been more opportune or welcome than this midnight supper. Each ball contained a salt plum as an appetiser to the rice. Of these salt plums the Japanese are inordinately fond.

It was nearly one o'clock; we had just finished this

strange meal, and the firing had slackened somewhat, when, without any warning, it recommenced with such fury that the Japanese gathered round in a circle, and, leaning on their rifles, gazed at one another in amazement. Well they might, for surely no one ever heard before on any battlefield such tremendous, sustained, and concentrated rifle-fire. The sound seemed to come from one monster gun, not from thousands of rifles: it was a continuous roar, amidst which even the rattle of the machine-guns could not be distinguished. The artillery on both sides became affected by this deafening noise, and in spite of the darkness opened up a furious bombardment, aiming at nothing in particular, but adding to the splendour of the scene. To onlookers it seemed certain, unless something happened speedily, that both sides would be annihilated, or else the ammunition exhausted and the result determined by the bayonet. The soldiers of the picket realised this: their swarthy faces became more gloomy, and they implored their corporal to allow them to go forward to the hill in front, from which they expected to obtain a better view, but the corporal again refused their repeated request.

How long this fusilade lasted it is hard to say: it may have been ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, or it may have been less. The searchlights all along the line neglected the ground in their immediate front, and concentrated their rays on this portion of the field, as if determined to give light to the combatants.

As suddenly as it had commenced, so also did the firing cease, and its place was taken by another and still more inspiring sound. From out of the darkness, enclosing the summit of Bodai in a leaden pall, and

broken only by the flashes of the rifles, there suddenly arose three tremendous shouts of "Banzai" from thousands of Japanese throats, which rolled along the lines and re-echoed among the hills behind, where they were taken up and passed along by the pickets at their posts. The moment was intensely dramatic to onlookers. For three hours we had watched the light of battle in our front. For three hours we had listened to the roar of the rifles. For three hours we had remained in doubt and anxiety, with nothing to guide us as to victory or defeat, except the continually shifting rays of the searchlights and the direction of the sound. Then, as a consummation to this night of splendour or horror—it is difficult to say which impression was paramount in the mind—came these wonderful shouts of "Banzai."

Cheers are seldom heard on modern battlefields: they are essentially an accompaniment of close-order formations. For the first time I was able to appreciate the tremendous moral force produced by shouts of victory. The story of great struggles of the past was forcibly brought back to the memory: for the first time I could understand what a British cheer at the termination of a bayonet charge in the Peninsular War must have meant, or how those hoarse shouts of "Vive l'Empereur," which ushered in the final advance of the Old Guard at Waterloo, must have sounded to the Allies on Mont St Jean.

The soldiers near me could no longer be restrained, nor did their corporal make any effort to hold them back. Each man, seizing his rifle, rushed along the ridges leading to the hill in front, stumbling over rocks, falling into dongas, and shouting "Banzai" like madmen. They had interpreted these shouts as

meaning victory, and no longer considered a failure possible. When we reached our new position the firing from Bodai recommenced, but a little later it gradually began to recede from the summit of the mountain. This looked as if the Japanese had been unable to maintain their position, and were again retiring towards Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West. Another ominous sign that things were not going well was the bombardment which the Japanese artillery suddenly opened upon Bodai. This could only mean that the infantry had been driven from the mountain. These shouts of "Banzai" marked the turning-point in the engagement, and although it was only natural to interpret victory from them, in reality they sounded the death-knell of the premature attempt to rush Port Arthur.

The engagement continued throughout the night with almost unabated fury. The sound of the firing gradually receded from Bodai, and the mountain was left wrapt in darkness. The combatants were now fighting foot by foot for the possession of the Banrhusan works and the Suishien valley. About 4 A.M. the firing had advanced almost to the foot of the railway embankment. Here, just before daylight, a final desperate engagement was fought, and this marked another turn in the fortunes of the combatants. The Russians had followed the routed Japanese down the slopes of Bodai into the Suishien valley. Finally they were met by large Japanese reinforcements, consisting of the 18th Brigade. The soldiers of this Brigade lined the embankment, and stopped any farther advance of the enemy. The Russians, discouraged by their heavy losses, were once more forced to retire and rest content with having

repulsed their opponents with enormous slaughter. They retired to the shelter of their forts, leaving Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West to be reoccupied by the Japanese.

The assault on Bodai was not the only fight on this eventful night. At two other points along the line the Japanese attacked or made demonstrations, while from the redoubts in front of the village of Suishien, captured by the 3rd Regiment on the night of the 21st, the Russians themselves made a determined sortie. About 2 A.M. heavy firing could be heard from the direction of Isusan in the west. The soldiers of the 11th Division attacked a fort in the east; but after the failure to take Bodai, and the subsequent determined counter-attack of the Russians, it was quite evident that those were merely demonstrations to draw off some of the pressure and divert the searchlights from the half-blinded soldiers holding the ground at the foot of the Banrhusan forts. The drooping spirits of the Japanese were raised about 3 A.M. by a shout of "Banzai" from the east, and we thought for a moment that a success had been gained in that quarter; but the sound faded feebly away, and was heard no more that night.

Up to five o'clock in the morning the infantry on both sides kept up a fusilade; but about that time the Japanese ran out of ammunition, as I heard afterwards, and that finally put an end to the combat. It would have been quite impossible to keep up the fight in the open Suishien valley during daylight, as both the Russians and Japanese would have found themselves exposed to the fire of the hundreds of guns on the forts or ranged in batteries around them. At daybreak, therefore, by mutual consent, the en-

gagement ceased. The weary Russian soldiers were only too glad to retire behind the shelter of their permanent works. The Japanese, equally worn out, were withdrawn to the shelter of the hills on the northern side of the Suishien valley, there to await the completion of the siege parallels. The slopes of Bodai and the ground round the Banrhusan works were left in the possession of the thousands of dead and wounded, the sole fruits of this bloody repulse.

I have merely attempted to describe the attack on Bodai on the night of August 23 as it appeared to me personally, but naturally such a description must be supplemented by facts gleaned afterwards from the headquarters staff, and from personal interviews with those who participated in and yet survived the engagement. I will now endeavour in a few words to summarise these accounts, and give an intelligible view of what occurred.

Shortly after 10 P.M. the 6th Brigade, led by the survivors of the 7th Regiment, passed up the valley between Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West and commenced to assault the neck of Bodai—that is, the lower part of the mountain between the two peaks of Bodai proper and H Fort. The Russians apparently did not offer much resistance at the line of the Chinese Wall, but allowed the brigade to get beyond it, when they were almost immediately mowed down by the fire of the Russian marksmen and the machine guns on the neck. A soldier told me afterwards he believed every Russian was armed with a machine gun. At the same time the 10th Brigade of the 11th Division moved farther to the left, and assaulted Bodai from the north-east. They too met with a terrible fire, not only from the summit of the mountain but

also from the garrison of the North Keikwansan Fort, right in their rear. In spite of their heavy losses they managed to occupy the peak of Bodai somewhere between 1 and 2 A.M., when the victorious troops raised the shouts of "Banzai." The 6th Brigade failed, however, to capture H Work.

Unfortunately it was not possible for the Japanese to maintain themselves on Bodai, for the Russians concentrated a tremendous fire on the top from the North Keikwansan Fort, and also from the New Banrhusan battery. More especially did the Japanese suffer from the fire of the latter, which speedily caused the 6th Brigade to be driven back. The 8th Osakas were in garrison in Banrhusan West, supported by the 9th Osakas, and it was part of the prearranged plan that this regiment should advance to the assistance of the 6th Brigade if necessary, and also deliver an assault on the new Banrhusan Fort, the fire from which was causing such loss to the troops on Bodai. The Osaka troops have borne a bad reputation throughout the Japanese army ever since the China war, and there seems to have been some misgiving as to the manner in which these reservists would acquit themselves on this particular night in the important *rôle* which fell to them. Some of the bravest veterans of the 7th and 35th Regiments had been sent to the 8th to show them the way, and to lead them forward to the attack. Just at the critical moment when the 6th Brigade were being driven back, the 8th Regiment should have advanced to their support by attacking the New Banrhusan Fort. They were ordered to advance, but nothing would induce them to leave the shelter of the trenches of Banrhusan West and the dead ground behind that work. In vain

did the veterans of the 7th and 35th sacrifice their lives to stimulate the 8th by their example. Staff Officers came up and entreated the wavering 8th to advance; but it was all in vain: nothing could induce the soldiers cowering behind their trenches to face the leaden storm on Bodai, and share the fate of their comrades. At this point some of the officers, seeing further coercion was useless, actually cut down their own men with their swords; but where inducement had failed, force failed also.

The consequence of this failure on the part of the Osaka troops was disastrous in the extreme to the 6th and 10th Brigades on Bodai, who could no longer maintain their position in the face of the Russian fire and the determined counter-attack delivered by Stoessel. The 6th Brigade were driven back first, and then the 10th. But when they came to the Chinese Wall they found the Russians had closed in behind them, and that their retreat was cut off. These unfortunate troops had therefore to cut their way through the Russians in order to regain the shelter of Banrhusan East.

The Russians, by this time greatly elated by their success, were not prepared to rest content with driving their opponents off Bodai, but followed them up, and delivered an attack on Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West. What actually happened at this point it is very hard to say. The survivors of the 6th and 10th Brigades were driven right back through the Banrhusan works and across the Suishien valley to the railway embankment, where the 18th Brigade checked the farther advance of the Russians. In their retreat they carried back the Osaka Brigade with them. The Russians continued to make headway until they came

to the embankment, where they met with a determined resistance not only from the troops they had just driven off Bodai, but also from the 18th Brigade of the 9th Division, which so far that night had not been engaged. The pursuers were speedily forced to return into the Banrhusan Forts. It is uncertain whether the Japanese ever really lost possession of these two forts, or whether some soldiers remained in them all through the night, hidden among the ruins. General Ichinohe himself told me that he was never driven out of Banrhusan. In that case the Russians, when they followed up their success into the Suishien valley, must have passed between these two forts, and not over them.

Although the Russians did not succeed in regaining their lost positions, the honours of this dreadful combat undoubtedly rested with them. They successfully repulsed what was intended to be a decisive attack on the fortress; they inflicted a loss of 15,000 killed and wounded on their stubborn opponents; and they threw back the progress of the siege operations to such good purpose that for more than a month no further attempt was made by the Japanese against any of their positions. Above all, Oyama was obliged to deliver his attack on Kouropatkin, entrenched at Liaoyang, unassisted by the Third Army Corps under General Nogi.

JAPANESE SOLDIERS DRAGGING ONE OF THE 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZERS TO THE FRONT.

CHAPTER X.

JAPANESE CAMP LIFE.

With the repulse of the Japanese from Bodai on the night of August 23 the first stage of the siege came to a close. It ended, as it was almost certain to do, in complete disaster to the besiegers, who disregarded all the recognised rules of modern warfare. The Japanese, in no wise guided by the experiences of other armies when attacking fortresses, and having no precedent in the history of their own country on which to draw, rushed madly up against positions which by their very appearance would have appalled any other soldiers. They relied on the bravery and devotion of their infantry, already proved on so many occasions, to supply the place of scientific preparation and heavy siege guns. The two armies were so exhausted by their exertions of the five previous days that on the morning of August 24 there was a lull all along the line. Occasionally a gun was fired, but the Japanese were so short of ammunition that anything in the nature of a general bombardment was quite out of the question. In the fight on the previous night the 9th Division fell short of ammunition, so far that the soldiers could only continue the engagement by collecting the cartridges of their dead comrades. This

division, which deserves to be called the Tenth Legion of General Nogi's army, almost ceased to exist as a military unit after this series of engagements; and until reinforcements arrived from Japan to fill the depletions in its ranks, there was little work or little fighting to be got out of it. On the days following this terrible struggle the question which agitated everybody was the fate of the thousands of unfortunate wounded lying around the Chinese Wall, beyond Banrhusan, and in heaps on the slopes of Bodai. It was utterly impossible to collect them: the vindictive spirit of the combatants, the proximity of the hostile lines, and, above all, the importance of keeping the character of the ground and defences as secret as possible, rendered all question of a temporary armistice, in which to collect the wounded and bury the dead, out of the question. The 7000 dead and wounded Japanese, therefore, not counting the Russians, were left exposed on this small area of ground between the lines, while within call were thousands of their friends who would have sacrificed everything to be able to bring them succour. Such is war; and some of the tales that are told of the sufferings of the wounded are too horrible to repeat.

Many of those who were yet able to move would lie still during the day, and then under cover of night would painfully crawl back to their lines, where they were lifted over the trenches by the willing arms of their comrades, and carried back to the hospitals. Many of the wounded lay for days, almost within reach of their friends, before death finally put an end to their sufferings. The Japanese soldiers in the trenches threw out biscuits and little packages of rice on the chance that the starving wounded, unable to move, would find them. Many men were saved by this help, and

above all by the precious water-bottles which were freely sacrificed by the soldiers in the trenches and thrown over to the wounded on the other side. Under cover of night rescue-parties would sally forth and scour the lower slopes of the mountain for wounded. Many were rescued, but hundreds lying higher up the mountain, closer to the Russian lines, perished in a miserable manner. The officers, including even those on the Staff, accompanied the soldiers on these night expeditions. Frequently the rescue-parties would encounter Russians who had set out on a similar errand, and a midnight skirmish would ensue between the detachments, both bent on the same errand of mercy, but each unable to judge the purpose of the other.

The great heat of the months of August and September on the Liautung Peninsula caused the bodies of the slain to putrefy very rapidly, and thus to other horrors in the advanced trenches was added the stench of the decaying bodies of their comrades left unburied. So dreadful did the condition of the front trenches become from this cause that the surgeons were obliged to serve out rags soaked in ammonia for the use of the sentries, to enable them to remain at their posts. In some places no sentry was kept on duty longer than half an hour.

It is remarkable that no outbreak of enteric was caused by the insanitary conditions prevailing; but throughout the entire siege there were very few cases of the disease which would surely have decimated any European army. The mysterious complaint known as "beri beri" carried off thousands of Japanese soldiers during the war. In General Nogi's army alone there were 15,000 cases during the months of July, August,

and September. The causes of beri beri are still a matter of considerable dispute. Experiments have been made on whole regiments in time of peace in Japan, which apparently prove that it is prevalent mostly among those who live chiefly on rice. This is far from a satisfactory explanation, because the Chinese inhabitants of the Liautung Peninsula have suffered also from its ravages, and they hardly ever touch rice, living for the most part on corn and barley. The head of the army hospitals told me that beri beri could be checked by mixing corn with the rice served out to the troops, and also by a supply of green vegetables. This was perfectly well known before the war, and the Medical Department, in anticipation of such an outbreak, endeavoured to arrange with the Commissariat Department to supply the troops in the field with an equal quantity of rice and corn, for the express purpose of keeping beri beri under. The Commissariat Department could not be induced to consent to this arrangement, as rice is so much more portable in the field than corn, and the transport arrangements had been made accordingly. It was only in July, after thousands of Japanese soldiers had been rendered *hors de combat* by the disease, that the Commissariat Department were induced, or ordered, to supply corn with the rice. The number of cases rapidly decreased after this change of diet. Beri beri is also a hot weather complaint, and the advent of the cold towards the end of September rapidly put an end to it.

As a food, I do not think anything superior to rice can be provided for soldiers in the field. It has the immense advantage of being very portable; it possesses highly nutritious qualities, for it has been proved over and over again in the present war that troops can be

kept going for many days on a mere handful of rice carried by the soldiers in their pockets; it is very fattening, and above all, it engenders thirst far less than the ordinary fare, such as meat and biscuits—an important consideration in a hot country. Moreover, rice is easy to cook, and although not very palatable to Europeans by itself, can be speedily rendered so by the addition of small quantities of ordinary condiments, such as butter, jam, pickles, or salt plums, the last being a particular favourite with the Japanese. When it is only possible to supply troops with meat in very small quantities, if the meat is stewed together with the rice it goes much farther; it is also much more appreciated than when devoured by hungry troops as an adjunct to the thirst-producing, teeth-destroying, armour-plated biscuit. It will be remarkable if other armies do not adopt rice as the principal article of diet for troops in the field after the experience gained from the recent struggle in the Far East. If soldiers were occasionally fed on rice in time of peace, especially during manœuvres, they would soon become accustomed to it in time of war. It is also a noticeable fact that troops fed on rice are not subject to enteric in the same manner as troops living on a meat diet, even though the sanitary conditions be as unfavourable as possible. This was the case before Port Arthur, where for six months nearly 100,000 men lived in fixed camps, which were kept in a really shocking state of filth.

On August 25 the Russians, evidently satisfied that for the present at any rate no further attempt would be made to rush their positions either by night or by day, commenced, as if in defiance, a much more vigorous bombardment. The shells were generally directed at the supposed position of the Japanese bat-

teries; but every now and again the gunners would draw a bow at a venture and drop their shells in all sorts of unexpected places, where they imagined a good target might be found. Some of the Europeans attached to the army lived in a camp pitched under the mountain of Hoshsan, and near by is a charming little valley through which a stream flowed. This supplied water to the camp, and was also the only spot for miles where it was possible to bathe with any degree of comfort. One afternoon a soldier was driving two horses down this valley to water them at the stream, when a Russian shell, fired at random (for it was absolutely impossible to see this valley from Port Arthur), burst just above the group, killed one horse, which fell in the stream, destroying by its putrefying carcass our water-supply, and wounded the other horse, which subsequently died on the bank. The soldier escaped unhurt.

Late in the afternoon of August 25 a naval engagement occurred outside Port Arthur, and it was rumoured that the *Novik* had been sunk. By the evening of August 26 the saps running across the Suishien valley up to the captured works of Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West were completed. Thenceforth no difficulty was experienced in holding these two works, although the Russians made a last desperate effort to retake them on the night of August 27, which proved unsuccessful. On the evening of the 28th there was a new species of entertainment, which for weirdness and grandeur would be hard to surpass. A tremendous thunderstorm burst over the country, and while it was at its height, at four in the morning, the whole of the Japanese artillery commenced to fire salvos into the town or against the forts, while at the same time the

infantry, at several points, made a feint of advancing. It was hard to see what object there was in this demonstration, unless General Nogi thought it might be possible to carry some of the outlying positions under cover of the storm, for the rain came down in such torrents that it was impossible to see more than a few yards ahead. From the summit of Hoshsan the spectacle was beautiful in the extreme. The heavens were lit by flashes of lightning, eight powerful search-lights illuminated the ground at the foot of the forts, and innumerable star-shells added their transient brilliancy to this strange scene. At 6 A.M., after absolutely nothing had been accomplished except a waste of valuable ammunition, the bombardment ceased, and both sides settled down quietly.

From the termination of the fighting on the morning of August 24 up to September 19, there was a lull in the operations of the Japanese army against Port Arthur. No further assaults were attempted against any of the positions, but during this period some of the most arduous work which fell to the army during the siege was being carefully carried out at night. This was the period when the engineers were busy pushing forward the siege lines against those forts which had been chosen for special attention in the near future. Day by day the aspect of the Suishien valley changed, so that a stranger, who had only seen the valley before the commencement of these colossal engineering operations, could hardly recognise the new formation of the ground. Mile after mile, earthworks in zigzag formation were dug from the shelter of the divisional ridge across the open plain, until the advanced parallels reached the foot of the forts. The engineers were assisted by large working-parties taken from the line

battalions, every man working willingly to complete the trenches as soon as possible. During the day, more especially as the saps approached the foot of the Russian positions, it was not possible to work, on account of the shell-fire, and the accuracy of the picked marksmen who shot everybody showing an inch of head above the sandbags. The Russian guns became very active during this period in shelling the Japanese gun positions, making excellent practice. The main Japanese naval battery came in for more than a fair share of attention, losing many men killed and wounded, including its commander, whose head was taken completely off by the fragment of a shell. On August 28 a Japanese gun was blown up by a shell, and twenty men were killed and wounded by this single projectile.

The soldiers and sailors wounded in these bombardments, together with many who were brought in from the front trenches, kept the field-hospitals very busy during this month of comparative peace, and I had many excellent opportunities of seeing how the Japanese soldier behaves when wounded, and when under the surgeon's knife. The result of this observation only served to increase my admiration for this extraordinary people, who seem to combine the hardihood of an almost prehistoric period with a skill and intelligence of an age yet to come. The Japanese are able to bear pain with even greater stoicism than the Turks. The medical regulations prescribed that chloroform was only to be used in cases of amputation, and during the entire siege I never recollect having seen a Japanese soldier under an anæsthetic. Neither do I recollect hearing a groan escape from any soldier while being attended to by the surgeon, with the single exception of a man in the fort of Banrhusan East, who had been

horribly scorched by a shell, and was groaning while unconscious. My friend, Captain Fortescue, the United States Military Attaché, told me that he had watched the behaviour of the wounded Japanese soldiers, and that although they apparently felt little pain on the day they were wounded, they suffered very much afterwards. On one occasion I was talking to a surgeon in one of the field hospitals when two sailors were brought in, survivors of the unfortunate battleship *Hatsuse*, sunk off Port Arthur in May. Both these men had been severely wounded by a Russian shell, which exploded in their battery. One of them was hit in the head, in the left leg, and also in the feet; but his severest injury was in the right thigh, for a large piece of shell, some 2½ inches long, had passed up between the flesh and bone. As he was laid on the operating-table I offered him a cigar, which he eagerly took, but the surgeon told him he had better not smoke just then. His slighter injuries were attended to first, and then the surgeon turned to the severe wound in the man's thigh. In order to pull out the piece of steel still embedded in the limb, he was obliged to pass his hand into the wound, which was so big as to hide it up to the wrist. During this painful operation the Japanese sailor never uttered a word, but kept trying to reach the breast-pocket of his coat, until the surgeon, irritated by his movements, asked him what he was doing and why he would not remain quiet. The sailor answered in Japanese, and his reply was interpreted to me: "He wants to give you a cigarette in exchange for the cigar you kindly gave him"; so the operation was delayed until he had accomplished this important purpose.

The politeness of the Japanese soldier is indeed very

remarkable. On a visit to the 1st Division, some fifteen miles away from General Nogi's headquarters, I encountered a party of Japanese soldiers, with whom I passed some time, and gave them a few cigarettes. They thanked me by signs, and I naturally thought no more of the matter, until a few days later, when a Staff orderly arrived with a letter from one of these men, who had seized the first opportunity he could to obtain leave to walk the fifteen miles to headquarters, to thank me officially through the Staff on behalf of himself and his friends.

Up to the end of August the headquarters of General Nogi had been at the village of Sodtaikon, some seven miles from the besiegers' lines; but at the end of the month they were moved forward to the village of Toboshin, quite close to the chain of hills forming the Japanese infantry positions, and conveniently situated near the railway. This village was well within range of the enemy's guns, though it could not be seen by him on account of the intervening hills. Nevertheless the Russians made repeated attempts to land shells in it, learning from Chinese spies that it was the headquarters of the army. This bombardment was never really vigorous or sustained, and I often wondered why a serious attempt was not made to bring the roof about Nogi's head. After the capitulation the real reason was disclosed by General Stoessel himself. He stated that he had been accurately informed as to the position of headquarters, as he knew for the first time after the surrender; but that he did not believe the reports of the Chinese spies to be true. To the Russian, with his ideas of comfort and luxury, it seemed incredible that the Generalissimo of the besieging army should live in such close prox-

GENERAL NOGI SUPERINTENDING THE MOUNTING OF THE 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZERS AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 9TH DIVISION.

imity to the fighting line, right under the guns of the fortress. Stoessel was of opinion that Nogi had his headquarters at Dalny, or at some comfortable village along the lines of communications, and that he directed all the operations by telephone from this vantage-point, occasionally paying a visit to the front.

The quarters of the General and his Staff were of the most unpretentious character: nothing could have been more simple than the manner in which they lived, setting a worthy example in this respect to all ranks. General Nogi's dwelling consisted of a small Chinese house with whitewashed walls, and divided into two rooms, in one of which the General slept on a camp bed, while in the other he worked. At the back of the house was a narrow garden, with a single big tree in it,—a great luxury on the Liautung Peninsula, where trees are so scarce; and under this tree during the hot weather Nogi was frequently to be found at work, or consulting with the various officers of his Staff. His Chief of Staff, General Ijichi, lived in another of these Chinese dwellings, from which the occupants had been forced to retire for the time being, though they doubtless received compensation. The lesser officers of the Staff found rooms in the other houses. The Chinese inhabitants, although they were obliged to give up their best houses, were not forced to leave the neighbourhood of headquarters, and found temporary quarters in the barns and other neglected-looking buildings which made up this small village, or farm as it should be called. The headquarters of General Nogi, therefore, to the ordinary European accustomed to the pomp and circumstance usually attaching to such installations in European armies, presented a very humble appearance. At the gate a single shabby war-worn sentry marched

to and fro, while close by a long line of horses sheltered by trees and straw awaited the needs of the officers and orderlies. Close by was situated the commissariat department of the headquarters. Great cauldrons of boiling rice, many fowls, and an occasional goat or pig, were scattered about, awaiting their turn to feed the General and his Staff. Entering the gate, you found yourself immediately opposite Nogi's house, and very likely in the doorway the General would be conversing with an officer. In another corner of the square was the telephone house, connecting headquarters to all points in the besieging lines, and close by a couple of Chinese women and their children would be driving a blindfolded donkey round a stone which ground the mealies for the family lunch. Mixed up in indiscriminate confusion were chickens, pigs, goats, orderlies, generals, women, and children.

Extreme simplicity in everything has been up to the present the keynote of the Japanese character. This is due to several causes, but chiefly to the poverty, viewed from a European standpoint, of the mass of the gentry of Japan. Where all the best in the land are poor, there is no striving after wealth and display; and as it is counted no disgrace to show their poverty by the most humble living, simplicity and unpretentiousness are the result. On the transports plying between Japan and Dalny, belonging for the most part to the Nippon Yusha Keisha Company, the Government allowance for officers' meals was ten sen a meal, or five cents gold. Imagine sending an English army out to South Africa and allowing the captain twopence-halfpenny a meal with which to feed the officers!

Any one could roam where he pleased about the headquarters, and at all times could see the Staff

Officers. The first occasion on which I met General Nogi was early in August at the village of Shandtaiko, just after my arrival at the front. He came out into the courtyard of his house to have all the correspondents introduced to him, and it was easy to see, by the few remarks he made on that occasion, what a superior type of man he was. Remembering the hundreds of rebuffs and insults Europeans were obliged to put up with in the Far East from numerous petty officials and officers of no position except that which existed in their own imagination, the contrast afforded by this new experience was all the more marked. In the former case their one and only joy in life seemed to be to send every stranger from their shores with a disgust, in many cases amounting to a positive detestation, of their countrymen, whom in their ignorance and conceit they imagined they represented. In the latter it is delightful to look back on the months spent with a man who seemed to take a special pleasure in rendering comfortable and happy those who were thrown by force of circumstances under his command.

In appearance General Nogi is slightly built, and somewhat taller than is usual among his countrymen. His small head is covered with iron-grey hair, cut so short that it almost stands up. He also wears a short grey beard. The shape of his head, the keen eyes, and the square-cut beard, give him very much the appearance of General Ulysses Grant; and, if one can judge from Port Arthur, his ideas of how a fight should be conducted do not vary much from those of the famous Northern leader. Although I have never had it reported that he said, like the latter, "I propose to fight it out on this line all the summer," General Nogi not only fought it out on the same line through the

purely journalistic point of view, was not very satisfactory; but for those who are interested in warfare and anxious to make a study of it under the most favourable conditions, nothing could have been better. They decided to allow, or rather to compel, everyone to remain up at the front, and to give us permission to go everywhere and see everything. They had no objection to our taking part in the fighting (if we cared to do so). They insisted in return that we should make no effort to send any news to the outside world of what was taking place. If we desired to visit any point in the Japanese lines we were obliged to walk over to headquarters and see one of the officers, whose especial duty it was to deal with foreigners. Every point in this vast theatre of operations was connected by telephone to General Nogi's headquarters. The officer would telephone to the particular part of the line one wished to visit, and inform the commanding officer of your intention, so that he might be prepared for your arrival. In order to reach the divisional lines sheltered behind the ridge running parallel to the eastern section of the forts, at a distance of about a thousand yards, it was necessary to pass over the roads leading through the exposed part of the Suishien valley. There was absolutely no cover from the Russian guns, for the saps only commenced at the divisional ridge. The road leading to the headquarters of the 9th Division was especially marked by the Russian gunners, and had been simply knocked to pieces by the big shells aimed at soldiers and transport. It resembled a cemetery on which a number of graves had been commenced and left unfinished. So notorious had it become, that it was known through-

out the army as the Shell Strewn Road. At the end of the siege a Company might have been floated. It would have paid large dividends to sell all the fragments of steel and iron lying about this dangerous path leading to the 9th Division. All the transport and ammunition had to pass along the Shell Strewn Road in order to reach the 9th Division under cover of the darkness, when the gunners could no longer see the tempting mark offered.

Some days you might pass in perfect safety without a single shot being fired, but on other days every two or three minutes a noise like an aërial motor-car would be heard coming rapidly towards you. The appalling sound made by these great projectiles when passing overhead was something which will never be forgotten by those who experienced the sensation for over six months, and although you gradually became accustomed to it, the respect and awe they inspired never diminished. When some great engagement is in progress you are apt to forget all about the shells in the excitement of the moment. It is very different, however, when everything is perfectly calm and peaceful, and suddenly from out of a clear sky you hear one of these terrible overhead motors, checked by no police regulations or speed limit, coming rapidly towards you. Then every other thought is eliminated except the one intense desire of self-preservation. Never does the human animal appear so small, contemptible, and intensely fragile, as when a mass of eight hundred and sixty pounds of steel, filled with some high explosive, is travelling in one's direction. When they burst it is quite impossible to describe the disturbance to earth and atmosphere caused by these monsters of modern ord-

nance. If the shell is some distance away, you see the cloud of smoke and sand before you hear the report. If the shell bursts close at hand, the sound and sight are simultaneous. From out of the black pall of smoke, intermingled with fragments of earth and rock, the pieces of the projectile fly round, apparently obeying no law except their own erratic impulse, and making that peculiar droning noise which caused the Japanese soldiers to christen them "humming-birds." The course of the fragments of shell is like that of an Australian boomerang. It is quite useless to endeavour to avoid them: you had better save yourself the trouble, sit still, and take your chance. They will land over the most nicely adjusted angle of a trench, they will come skipping round corners where you had imagined yourself to be perfectly safe, they will fly in the opposite direction to which the shell has been aimed, or skim along like a swallow a few inches from the ground. The wounds these twisted fragments of steel inflict are horrible in the extreme. Generally they are merciful and kill outright; but a man may have his leg half-torn off, or his arm carried away, or other dreadful injuries inflicted. Then, just because modern surgery takes a pride in keeping every one alive, the sufferer may have to exist for years in a maimed condition, a misery to himself and a burden to others. At Port Arthur almost every known gun and projectile was employed: 12-inch, 10-inch, 9-inch, 6-inch guns; 12-pounders and 3-pounders; howitzers and shrapnel; not to mention mines, torpedoes, and hand-grenades. Whenever a cart or even an individual appeared on this road, especially in the early stages of the siege when the Russians had plenty of ammunition, they

would be certain to draw the fire of the Russian gunners. Every inch of this dangerous path was known to those who were obliged to frequent it. Certain little havens of refuge, such as banks, small trenches, the remains of a ruined house, inequalities in the ground, and during the summer the long Indian corn, were eagerly sought after by men on their way to the front, who would rush from one point to another between the intervals of the shells. Europeans, and even Japanese, would go down the Shell Strewn Road hugging the bank like trout. The Chinese alone seemed absolutely indifferent, for men, women, and children would pass straight down the centre of the road without moving an inch to the right or to the left to avoid a projectile.

The first time I visited the advanced trenches of the besieging army was in September, when, accompanied by my friend Mr Gerald Morgan, I went down to the 9th Division. We encountered the 15th Kobi Regiment encamped near the railway bridge. This was the first occasion that Europeans had been seen near the front, and our arrival caused quite a little excitement among the assembled soldiers, who took us for Russians until we explained our nationality. The officers of the regiment came out and insisted on our entering their shelter, where we were regaled in the usual Japanese fashion, with tea-cakes, sweets, and cigarettes. After conversing with them for some little time in broken English, still more broken French, and a few words of Japanese, we passed on under the railway bridge and here met the 3rd battalion of the 12th Regiment. I tried to pass up to the top of the little ridge under which they were encamped, but was stopped by the sentry and taken to the commandant

of the battalion, a man called Shiki, who subsequently became a great friend of mine, and was one of the most agreeable Japanese I have ever met. Major Shiki subsequently invited me to pass the night in his shelter. I think he must have sent out and scoured the entire country for food, for he gave me a most excellent dinner of several courses. After dinner he sent for the officers of his battalion, and they told me tales of the personal adventures they had experienced in the various engagements in which their regiment had taken part. The Japanese are nothing loth to describe their deeds on the field of battle, and they tell them in such an open natural manner that all suspicion of boasting is removed. Their brother officers confirm or show their approval of a friend's story, and I have passed many interesting evenings listening to the stories told by these brave men. Major Shiki showed me his Samurai sword, which was three hundred years old, and had been twisted by a bullet in the attack on Taikosan; also his field-glasses, through which a bullet had passed while he was holding them in his hand, directing the attack. We sat up till quite a late hour discussing the war; then Shiki's servant came in and laid blankets on the floor of the shelter and we turned in.

On the following morning I asked Major Shiki if he would allow me to go round his trenches: he said he would take me himself, and we were just starting off when a number of recruits arrived, part of a body of some 7000 reinforcements whom I had seen arrive on the previous day. They had been kept behind the lines during the night, and were now being apportioned to the various battalions to which they belonged. Shiki was obliged to remain in camp to inspect them,

and also to deliver an address on the duties they were about to perform. He therefore said he would send an intelligent soldier round with me as a guide.

At this time the besiegers' lines were not very close up to the Russian positions, except where they entered Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West; but the engineers, assisted by large working-parties, were gradually pushing them forward under cover of night. The soil of Liautung, which is soft and sandy and much broken up by nullahs and watercourses, lent itself admirably to siege works, and of this the skill of the engineers took full advantage. On my way to the front I encountered many signs of the terrible struggle of the past weeks, as for the first time I passed beyond the shelter of the divisional ridge, through the saps, into the open valley beyond. Broken rifles, fragments of shells, great-coats, ammunition-belts, and thousands of rounds of ammunition, lay scattered around in all directions, and every now and then a hastily dug grave marked the last resting-place of one of Russia's or Japan's fighting men.

Groups of soldiers, looking for the most part listless and tired, were scattered about these trenches, resting from their labours of the previous night. As I approached nearer to the front the trenches became more shallow, and showed signs of having been thrown up in a hurry. They were not then, as they were later, seven or eight feet deep, and so carefully angled from the Russian fire that it was possible to walk from one end of the besiegers' lines to the other in comparative safety, at a distance varying from thirty to a hundred yards from the enemy. At this early period of the siege the advanced trenches were only about

two or three feet deep, and it was necessary to crawl on all-fours to avoid the fire of the enemy's sharp-shooters, ever on the look-out for a favourable target. In places the saps were not connected up, and to get from one to another it was necessary to make a hasty dash across the open, or else to crawl through the long Indian corn which was still standing in the valley. I had a good opportunity of seeing in what an utterly reckless manner the Japanese soldier regards all dangers, and how he seems to enjoy risking his life. The soldier who was acting as my guide, whenever he came to a spot where it was necessary to run across the open, or take a more circuitous route round, or else to crawl through the corn, would invariably choose the first of these courses, and rush across the open, relying on his truly surprising agility to dodge the bullets aimed at him. When he came to the next sap he would jump over the top, landing in a heap on any soldiers who happened to be there; then, having communicated the joke to them, he and his friends would beckon to me to follow, or else by some sweeping gesture of the hand suggest a new way round, laughing like children all the time. At last we came to the most advanced trench of all, facing the North Keikwansan Fort, and here I found many soldiers, and also an officer whom I had met late the previous night. This sap was only about two feet six inches deep, and the Japanese soldiers were obliged to lie down in order to avoid the enemy's fire: as it was practically no protection from shrapnel, the soldiers had boarded in a small portion of the top, to provide some shelter when the enemy opened up their shell-fire. Having caused somewhat of a disturbance in entering this

trench, the attention of the Russian gunners was attracted to it, and they opened up with shrapnel. Everyone crawled underneath the boards on the arrival of the first shell, and as many as could find room remained huddled together, while those who arrived late and could find no room remained just outside, amid the jeers and laughter of their more fortunate comrades. The Japanese soldiers insisted upon my sharing their humble rations of biscuits and tinned meat, and above all, their water, most valuable commodity of all, as the supply was limited to what each man brought with him in his bottle. The generosity of the Japanese is very remarkable: they are always willing to share anything they have with a friend.

Directly the Russian gunners relapsed once more into silence everyone left the covered portion of the trench for the more roomy outside, and I was able to have a look round. About 400 yards in front was the sandy-coloured North Keikwansan Fort, with rows of sand-bags on the top and loopholes for the riflemen. If you remained for a few seconds with your head over the top of the trench, one of these marksmen would be sure to take a shot at it. The Japanese soldiers also amused themselves by shooting at the loopholes, so there was a continual rifle-fire kept up between the hostile lines. The Russians, knowing all the ranges, shot most excellently, sending almost every bullet on the top of the trench, and throwing the dust over the men in the trenches. Occasionally a Japanese soldier would place his cap on the sand-bags to attract the fire of the Russian marksmen, while his comrades from other parts of the sap would shoot at the loopholes. Enormous quantities of canvas

bags were sent over from Japan, and these were carried forward into the front parallels and filled with the earth taken out of trenches, and then placed in line on the top, intervals being left for loopholes. As more earth was dug away so more rows of sand-bags were placed in position, until the trenches were seven or eight feet deep and about four or five feet wide. At this period the 9th Division used to lose on an average some thirty men a day, killed or wounded, by this fire between the advanced lines. A regiment would be on duty for twenty-four hours at a stretch, and would then be relieved by another. Just at dusk the relieving regiment would fall in and commence to wind its way through the trenches, while the regiment off duty would return and occupy their vacated camp.

The interest attaching to Port Arthur was chiefly derived from the great variety of the positions, and one of the most interesting trips I made was when, accompanied by Mr Gerald Morgan, I went to the village of Suishien, which had been captured from the Russians on the night of August 20. The village was very difficult to approach, because the Russians had four lunettes just to the south of it, and there was also Fort Kouropatkin on the left,—all these works commanding the road leading to the village. If you were careful and avoided the main road, and took advantage of all the hollows and the long Indian corn, you could reach the outskirts of the village. From there you made your way through the streets to the trenches which the Japanese had constructed along the south side, facing the Russian lunettes, towards which they were gradually pushing their way preparatory to an assault at no distant

date. We managed to reach the outskirts of the village without attracting the unwelcome attention of any of the Russian marksmen, who added to the excitement of life to such a marked degree. There we encountered some soldiers of the 3rd Regiment, who were engaged in pulling down the houses and carrying away the woodwork for their fires and shelters. They showed us the safest way through the village, which led through a succession of half-destroyed houses and their gardens, the exposed spots being carefully protected by boards and earthworks. On every side was a terrible scene of destruction, and this once beautiful village, a kind of summer residence for the garrison of Port Arthur, presented to the view nothing but ruined houses, some destroyed by fire, some with their walls battered in by shells, some with their roofs half gone or else black and scorched in the various fires which raged in the village during the attacks and counter-attacks. The gardens had been torn up or trodden under foot by the combatants, while in many cases the dead had been buried in them. Scattered about in all directions were articles of everyday use, such as broken crockery, smashed furniture, and cooking utensils. It was not, however, a bad spot for a regiment to be encamped in, for they could find excellent cover and shelter among the ruins; and it must have been infinitely more pleasant than being on duty in the trenches, cramped for room and exposed to the hot sun. Near the far end of the village a bomb-proof shelter had been dug out and very strongly roofed in for the colonel and his staff.

On campaign the colonel always lives in the same hut with his adjutant and the regimental

ensign, who acts as a sort of A.D.C. to him when not engaged in carrying the colours. There are also several non-commissioned officers who act as staff sergeants and do the writing and copying work. The other officers live separately, generally with their companies. The officer in command at first received my friend and myself rather coldly: he had no idea who we were, and I am inclined to think he imagined we might be Russian spies. Nevertheless, with the usual Japanese hospitality and politeness he invited us into his shelter and supplied us with tea and cigarettes. Unfortunately there was no one present who spoke English or French, so intercourse was a little difficult. Although I did not know it at the time, the colonel immediately telephoned up to head-quarters to inquire if we were all right, and having received a reassuring answer everything went well. A little later a lieutenant, very old for his rank, and speaking perfect English with a very marked American accent, came up and was able to interpret. He told me that he was formerly in the army, but had retired some time before the outbreak of the war, and was engaged in business with an American firm in Yokohama, but had now been recalled to the colours. The colonel invited us to lunch with him, at the same time apologising for not being able to give us anything to eat except biscuits and sugar,—"for," he added, "my regiment have lived on biscuits, and occasionally tinned meat, for the last four weeks, as on account of the enemy's fire it is quite impossible to bring any transport down to the village except by carrying it on the backs of the men, parties of whom go back every day for this purpose. At lunch we eat biscuits and sugar, and at night tinned meat and

biscuits; but as you are here as our guests we will now eat our tinned meat." Tea, of course, accompanied this meal, and here again the gallant colonel was able to produce from the corner of his shelter the usual box of Japanese sweets and another of cakes sent by some anxious relative in Japan. I also had a few good cigars, so we passed a very pleasant time. While we were at lunch the Russians commenced to shell the village, and landed one shell right on to the top of the colonel's quarters, without injuring any one.

After lunch we asked and obtained permission to visit the advanced trenches to the south of the village, and the colonel sent us forward under the charge of the lieutenant who spoke English. We passed through numerous houses riddled with bullets by the Russian marksmen, who kept up this fusilade all day on the chance of hitting somebody. Just before we reached the advanced trenches we came upon a spot protected for a distance of forty yards merely by some thin boarding, which any bullet would penetrate. Our guide told me that they had put this up to save them the bother of building a trench, and that as it looked to the Russians like a solid wall some eight feet high, they never took the trouble to fire at it. The advanced parallel, to the south of the village, which was packed with infantry, was a very solid structure and full of loopholes, for the Russians had made repeated sorties, especially at night, on the Japanese working-parties. A short distance to the front the Japanese engineers were busy pushing forward another sap, in spite of the close proximity of the Russians, who kept up a continual fusilade on these brave men, and also turned a big gun on the spot. The engineers went on

working as quietly and as coolly as if they had been engaged in manœuvres in Japan: whenever the big shell was heard approaching they would lie down and wait until it had exploded. Every now and again the Russian gunners would turn their attention to the village, bringing the roofs about the heads of the Japanese soldiers peacefully sleeping inside the houses. These men, provided no one was hurt, would change their positions and then go to sleep again, so accustomed had they become to this never-ceasing fire. Nothing is more interesting in warfare than visiting a village which has been the scene of a protracted struggle. On our way back from Suishien we came in for a lot of unpleasant attention from the Russian sharpshooters, who had suddenly waked up in the cool of the afternoon and enjoyed having a little practice at our expense. After we had passed out of range of the sharpshooters, and had almost reached the naval battery, the Russians commenced to bombard it. So severe was this fire that a kindly bluejacket, belonging to the *Hatsuse*, ran out and invited us to take shelter in the battery, which we did.

General Tsuchiya, the commander of the 11th Division, and General Oshima, the commander of the 9th, were especially agreeable to foreigners, and it was always very pleasant to visit their divisions. In order to reach the headquarters of the 9th Division it was necessary to pass down the Shell Strewn Road and under the railway bridge, until you came under the lee of the low hills which provided cover for the encampments of the infantry, and also for their general and his staff. A Japanese encampment is an object-lesson in the manner in which a number of men can be crowded into a small space and yet be comfortable.

Naturally, on account of the fire of the Russian guns, it was necessary to keep as close as possible under this range of foothills, otherwise the shells from the high-angle-fire guns would be able to skim over the top and burst among the camps at the foot. The sides of the hills were therefore terraced out in several tiers, and on these terraces the soldiers erected their little *tents d'arbres*, which just provided cover from the sun and rain, and were almost identical to those used in South Africa. Near the crest of the hill was cut a somewhat wider terrace than those below, and on this the colonels of battalions and their staffs had their shelters erected. These were made of wood, boughs, and mats, covered in with waterproof sheets, and stood some four feet high. Wherever you find a Japanese you will find a mat: where they all come from it is impossible to say. The supply seems to be inexhaustible, and it does not matter what the conditions or the locality may be, you will always be invited to sit on these indispensable adjuncts of Japanese conquest. Their shelters before Port Arthur were roofed, walled, and carpeted with these mats, making them delightfully cool and clean; while strewn about the floor in reckless confusion were rugs of all colours, and very often cushions. Neatly arranged along the sides were the personal effects of the occupants, contained in little wooden trunks with the owner's name on the outside, four of which could be carried on the back of a single mule or pony. No one was allowed to enter these sacred palaces of humble cleanliness without first removing his boots, and visitors were then provided with slippers or invited to sit in their socks. When you were inside one of these Japanese shelters, fanning yourself with

a fan passed you by your host, one orderly handing you sweets and cakes, and Japanese tea in dainty little cups, and another supplying you with cigarettes, it was almost impossible to imagine yourself only a thousand yards away from the guns of a mighty fortress: you felt rather as if you had suddenly intruded into the midst of some schoolgirls' tea-party. This happy illusion would be abruptly dissipated by the bursting of a shell right over your head; the frail structure in which you were reclining might have its roof taken off, or farther down the hill a party of soldiers would be bearing one of their comrades away on a stretcher. Generals, officers, and men all lived in much the same manner, though naturally the men were not always able to provide themselves with mats and cups and other little luxuries. The divisional commander has a slightly larger dwelling than his regimental officers, and so on down the scale, in the same manner as a man's rank or position can always be gauged in Japan by the size of his visiting-card. In none of these little houses was there room to stand up: if you desired to stretch your limbs it was necessary to go outside.

A few bell-tents were served out to each division to cover stores, for the use of the Staff officers, as a mess-room, or for other general purposes. The bell-tents used by the Japanese army were made from very light canvas, and were supported by a steel pole made in two pieces which telescoped one into another. They are larger than those used in the British Army, and in spite of their increased size are considerably lighter. But here their advantages end, for they cannot be pitched as taut as an ordinary tent; they are little protection from the sun, on account of the thinness of

the material used; the wind and dust always seemed to find a dozen ways of coming inside under the loose flapping flies; and the thin steel pole invariably buckled in anything like a gale, and had to be replaced by a stout young tree.

Each division had a canteen attached to it, at which various articles could be obtained: soap, cigarettes, sweets, cake of all sorts, *saki* and beer, various articles of clothing, including sheep-skins for the cold weather, gloves, mittens, socks, shirts, boots, slippers, mats, caps, and handkerchiefs. The enterprising Chinese also set up stores near the divisions, and succeeded in attracting a large amount of the trade to themselves. The Chinamen dealt in cigarettes, beer, matches, Chinese wine (horribly sweet stuff, but apparently much appreciated by the Japanese soldiers), and they also sold an enormous quantity of little brown cakes made from flour and sugar, highly flavoured, and not unlike a sponge-cake to the taste. Salt, pepper, margarine, and various tinned articles could also be obtained at reasonable rates from Dalny.

The Japanese are, as every one probably knows, very clean in their personal habits. In what other army do you find every soldier carrying a tooth-brush with him on a campaign? But apparently their individual cleanliness does not extend to their camp organisation, and it was a matter of great surprise to me to see in what a filthy state the ground round their camps was kept. They paid little attention to safeguarding the drinking-water, and I have over and over again seen soldiers washing themselves and also their canteens in dangerous proximity to it. While I was camping under Hoshsan in the hot weather, Japanese regiments were constantly camped on the

other side of the little stream which supplied us with drinking-water, and no effort was made to preserve this supply from pollution. A little spring had been found in the river bed, and this had been carefully dammed off from the main stream to serve exclusively as drinking-water. It was therefore very discouraging to find soldiers coming down to the stream and washing their canteens in our drinking-water, and finally we were obliged to apply to have a sentry put on guard over it. I am naming this particular instance, but there are many others which came under my notice while at the front. Fragments of food and rice were allowed to remain lying around in all directions; no arrangements were made for washing-places; in fact, I have never seen anything to equal the condition of the ground in the immediate vicinity of some of the camps. Any other army would have suffered from this neglect by having a terrible outbreak of enteric; but that complaint was rare amongst the Japanese, although the insanitary conditions prevailing were doubtless responsible to a certain extent for dysentery and beri beri.

When I first visited the headquarters of the 11th Division I was introduced to General Tsuchiya, who was sitting in his mat hut talking to his Chief of Staff. He invited me to come inside, and received me very kindly. Tsuchiya was a big, thick-set man with a large head; he invited me to lunch with him and his Staff. The Japanese Staff officers on active service live very humbly, and on almost exactly the same food as their men, supplemented with a few minor articles. Each division had a headquarters *chef*, taken from one of the regiments, and they could always turn out an excellent meal on emergency. General Oshima, the

commander of the 9th Division, was a special friend of all foreigners, and always took a delight in showing them the relics his soldiers had taken from the Russians—field-pieces, machine-guns, mines and hand-grenades, search-lights, rifles, and even musical instruments, which were frequently found in the captured positions. In appearance the General is short and wiry, with coal-black hair, and a large moustache curled up like the Kaiser's; he has a pair of extraordinarily keen penetrating eyes, and is very aristocratic in appearance. He is certainly one of the finest soldiers in the Japanese army, and his division was almost invariably successful throughout the siege. Oshima commanded the 9th Division for seven years before the war, and he told me he had taken the greatest care to train his troops to the highest possible point of perfection, and he therefore felt keenly the loss of nearly all his old soldiers, killed or wounded, in the August assaults. On that day he saw the results of seven years' steady training thrown away in a few hours, and their place taken by raw recruits or reservists, who, however well they might fight, could not be the same as his old veterans. While speaking of the 9th Division I must not forget Lieutenant Hori, Oshima's A.D.C., who in times of peace is an agent of the Standard Oil Company in Japan. He spoke English perfectly, and at the commencement of the war he volunteered, and was attached to the 7th Regiment, but he was soon promoted to Oshima's staff. My friends and myself spent more happy hours in Hori's company than in that of any other officer, and he was always willing to do all in his power to assist us.

The failure of the 8th Osaka Kobi Regiment, attached to the 9th Division at that time, to advance

on the night of August 23, was largely responsible for the defeat sustained by the Japanese, and the Staff of the 9th Division were very bitter in their denunciation of them. General Nogi brought them back behind the lines and encamped them at the foot of Hoshsan. There they remained for several weeks, and during that period they were out for six or eight hours a day in the hot sun, engaged in recruit drill or in practising the attack. Later on they were sent down the lines of communications and split up into small parties to guard the railway. Some were sent to Dalny, where they were engaged in unloading the transports. The way of the transgressor is indeed hard in the Japanese service, and I suppose these unfortunate men felt their position keenly at first; but as month after month passed by and nothing came down the line except the maimed bodies of their comrades whom they had left at the front, they could obtain some little satisfaction from being still alive, and of having the prospect of again seeing their own country.

CHAPTER XI.

RESUMPTION OF ACTIVE OPERATIONS.

By the middle of September Nogi's preparations were so far advanced that he was in a position to resume active operations against the fortress. The new attack was not to be directed against the permanent chain of forts on the hills, forming the main line of defence, but against the outlying positions which had baffled all previous efforts, and blocked the way by which the siege parallels might approach the permanent forts. Nogi's new plan of operations was divided into three separate attacks at widely different points along the enemy's extended front.

(1) Commencing in the west, the 1st Division was to drive the Russians off the last two prominent peaks held by them on the Metre Range, Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill. The fortifications, as far as they were known to the Japanese, consisted of the usual earth-works, bomb-proof shelters, and rifle-pits, and at the foot of the positions the customary wire entanglements. On Namakoyama the muzzles of two big guns pointed menacingly over the entrenchments, showing that the Russians placed more than ordinary importance on retaining possession of the hill. As for 203 Metre Hill, little or nothing was known of that position. The

objective of the 1st Division was to obtain possession of those two positions and drive the Russians within the line of their western forts, behind the shelter of Tayanko and Isusan.

(2) The 3rd Regiment of the 1st Division had been encamped in Suishien ever since the capture of that village on the night of August 20. I have already stated in a previous chapter that they had been busily employed in sapping towards the four infantry works, or lunettes, held by the Russians to the south of the village.

(3) The third operation was to be made against Fort Kouropatkin by the 18th Brigade of the 9th Division, and if successful would be continued to the Liugen work.

The great difficulty of conducting operations against the four Suishien redoubts, Fort Kouropatkin, and Liugen, lay in the fact that all these positions were situated on level ground, right under the muzzles of the guns of the permanent forts, and were always liable to be subjected to their plunging fire. If the Japanese succeeded in capturing these six works, the outlying square held by the Russians in the Suishien valley would collapse like a pack of cards, and the Russians would find themselves immediately cut off from their water-supply, for it would be a very simple matter for the Japanese engineers to cut the mains leading into the town. All three attacks were fixed for September 19; and in order to assist the 1st and 9th Divisions, the 11th Division was to make a demonstration in the east, to draw as many of the defenders as possible to that quarter. As the attacks on Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill were the most important of the three, or rather the most difficult to bring to a

successful conclusion, it is as well to follow the fortunes of the Japanese in that quarter of the field before dealing with the assaults on the redoubts.

Up to this time the Japanese had not realised the peculiar value of 203 Metre Hill in the defence of Port Arthur. I do not think they were certain that it commanded such an extensive survey of the harbour, and in fact was the only position from which a view of the fleet could be obtained. They had not grasped the importance of capturing this hill at all costs, and sacrificing every other consideration to this dominating factor in the situation. As far as could be gathered, their main reason for attacking 203 Metre Hill in September was because its summit commanded a view of the railroad built by the Russians from Port Arthur to Laoteshan, along which, it was reported, the Russians could be seen daily conveying stores and munitions of war. It was generally thought that Stoessel, on account of his having said that he would die in the last ditch, would dig that last ditch somewhere on the slopes of mighty Laoteshan. The Japanese were particularly anxious to prevent him from carrying out this intention, and they felt that if they captured 203 Metre Hill they would be able by their artillery fire to prevent a concentration at Laoteshan.

The approaches to both Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill are very steep; the grassy glacis is broken half-way up the northern slope of Namakoyama by stony ground, which would provide some cover for an attacking force. To the west of Namakoyama, at a distance of about a thousand metres, and separated from it by a valley, is another hill, which had been captured by the Japanese in August, called 174 Metre

Hill. After its capture they had erected trenches on its summit, and encamped a battalion on its reverse slope. Just to the north of Namakoyama is a little hill, which was also occupied by the Japanese, although exposed to the fire of the forts from the east and to the rifles and cannon of Namakoyama. A deep trench had been thrown up on its summit, and behind this, in an incredibly small space, a battalion of the 1st Regiment had been crowded for the last three weeks. The colonel of the regiment, Teruda, an old veteran who had been present at fifty-seven engagements in the course of his career, had insisted on taking up his post with this battalion in its exposed position. He expressed no other desire than to die with the regimental colours near him, and for three weeks he had lived on the hillside, unable to move a foot without the danger of being shot, and, refusing all additional luxuries, had eaten the simple fare of his soldiers. As might be expected, the 1st Regiment, with such a colonel, was in the highest possible state of efficiency. It will be seen that in order to attack the enemy the Japanese infantry had no long marches to make; they had simply to step out of their home for the past month and attack the enemy in his, a few hundred yards away.

General Matsumura, the commander of the 1st Division, directed operations from a bomb-proof shelter erected on a hill about one thousand yards from Namakoyama. The force he could bring into line consisted of two regiments, the 1st and 15th, of three battalions each, forming his 1st Brigade under Major-General Yamamoto; also one brigade of the Kobi reserve, composed of the 1st, 15th, and 16th Regiments, under Major-General Takenouchi, which

had been attached to the 1st Division since the commencement of the siege,—in all, fifteen infantry battalions. The 2nd Regular Brigade of his Division, composed of the 2nd and 3rd Regiments, was engaged in operating against the Suishien redoubts.

September 19 was a bitterly cold day; the wind blew from the north, finding its way through the thickest clothing and penetrating every fibre of the body. It was the first warning of nature that the season for favourable operations was rapidly drawing to a close. At 2.30 in the afternoon the first shot was fired from the Japanese artillery; and then, one after another, the batteries took it up, until more than sixty guns were concentrating their fire on Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill. The Japanese had posted their guns so as to protect them from the fire of the fortress, which frequently put their batteries out of action. To the right of the hill from which General Matsumura was directing the engagement they had three batteries of field-artillery, each gun beautifully placed out of sight just on the reverse of a gentle slope. Behind these were some batteries of naval guns—long 12-pounders—also placed behind a hill, and, still farther back, some guns of larger calibre, probably naval 4·7's. To the left were their field-howitzers, throwing a 45-lb. shell, and also several batteries of field-artillery.

The Japanese gunners at first devoted their attention to the lower trenches on both Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill, destroying them with common shell and endeavouring to drive out the infantry with shrapnel; but directly the Russians endeavoured to reply, they concentrated their fire on the summit and speedily silenced the Russian guns. One big gun

on Namakoyama was fought with the greatest courage. It stood out exposed to full view, sending forth a great cloud of white smoke every time it was fired, and it continued in action long after the other guns had ceased to fire. It was from the forts of Port Arthur itself that the Russians effectively replied to the Japanese fire; the Paiyuisan Fort became especially aggressive, and opened on the Japanese batteries with a gun of very large calibre, probably a 10-inch. Smaller guns from all sorts of positions, hitherto masked, also opened on the Japanese, until the air became alive with shells and flame. The hill on which General Matsumura stood was peculiarly situated, for it had friendly batteries on either side and in its rear, and the enemy's guns in front, so that the Japanese shells were passing over it while the Russian shells burst around it. The big gun on Hacugiyokusan fired a shell charged with ordinary black powder, and consequently the immediate front was blotted out by the smoke rolling across it. As for Namakoyama, its summit presented the appearance of an active volcano, the smoke of the bursting shells and the earth thrown up after each explosion enveloping the trenches and completely hiding them from view; while the hill might have been deserted, for not a man was visible, and even the big gun had ceased to fire.

The Russian gunners made excellent practice on the battery of naval 15-pounders, and in a very short space of time they had placed ten shells just in front of the left-hand gun of the battery. The gun discipline of the Japanese was admirable. In spite of the severity of the fire to which they were exposed, the blue-jackets loaded and fired with the greatest coolness, leaving the bomb-proof shelter alongside the gun between the in-

tervals of the enemy's shots, and returning to cover every time a shell could be heard approaching. They were not, however, always in time, and one shell killed or wounded three men, bursting apparently right on top of the gun. The survivors bore their comrades to the rear and then returned to their piece, which they continued to serve until the order was given to cease fire for a time, to allow the Russians to pick up a fresh object. They chose the battery of field-artillery in front of the naval guns, admirably placed on the reverse slope of a low hill. The shells never seemed able to hit their mark, but burst either just too short or just too far, so skilfully had the position been chosen. The officer in charge walked up and down behind his guns, absolutely ignoring the shells bursting all around him, and commented on each shot fired by his men, correcting the aim, or altering the objective. Finally, a better aimed shell landed right on to one of these guns and knocked it backward out of its emplacement, so that it remained useless throughout the remainder of the engagement.

So far the artillery alone had taken part in the contest. The Russian guns on Namakoyama were entirely silenced, and not a sign of life or movement was visible in any of the trenches or in the redoubts on the summit. At 6.30, after the bombardment had lasted for nearly four hours without intermission, a few Japanese soldiers were seen to leave the shelter of the little hill to the north of Namakoyama and run at full speed across the open towards the rocky ground half-way up the Russian position. It was the 1st Regiment advancing. The leading men got across unmolested, so effectually was the Japanese shrapnel keeping the Russian infantry huddled in their trenches; but directly

the advance of the 1st Regiment was discovered the Russians opened a heavy rifle-fire on all who essayed the passage. The light, however, was failing, and most of them succeeded in making their way up the side of the hills to the rocky ground, where each man would fling himself down and disappear from view. Between 7 and 8 o'clock, when darkness finally obscured everything, quite a large force of infantry was concentrated on the dead ground below the first trench, and only waiting for the signal to advance. The artillery continued to burst shrapnel over the hill in spite of the darkness, and the flames of the shells momentarily lighted up the crest.

There was no search-light on Namakoyama, but the powerful light on Isusan, a mile to the east, came to the assistance of its hard-pressed comrade and endeavoured to discover any forward movement of the Japanese; but so carefully had the angle of the hill been chosen that the infantry remained entirely invisible. More effective were the star shells discharged from 203 Metre Hill: these burst into thousands of blue stars over the crouching infantry among the rocks, anxiously expecting the signal to assault. These weary hours of waiting must have been a terrible strain on the soldiers of the 1st Regiment. The north wind blew an icy gale from the sea, and even with coats and many blankets it was impossible to keep out the frozen blasts. What, therefore, must have been the suffering of the khaki-clad troops on the hill, who had gone forward without coat or blanket, carrying nothing except their rifles and ammunition!

The firing, which had gradually died away into a few stray shots for the last two hours, reopened with redoubled severity at 11 P.M. In spite of the search-

lights and star shells it was impossible to see what was happening, and the sense of hearing alone could tell one that the fight was moving up the hill. This proved to be the case, for at 11.30 Matsumura's aide-de-camp announced that the first trench had been won. With the early light of dawn on the 20th it was possible to find out what had taken place during the night. The position was this: the 1st Regiment had captured the advanced trench and were holding their ground on the reverse side of it, while during the night they had constructed three shelter-trenches on the ground just below the one already taken. Most of the companies were huddled together shivering on any patch of dead ground; but as the space was limited and not nearly sufficient for the 2000 men crowded together on the slope, some of the companies had been retired down to the stony ground from which the advance had been made on the preceding night. As for the Russians, they were still holding the crest of Namakoyama, and sniping at any soldier who endeavoured to shift his position or to ease his cramped limbs. A distance of barely eighty yards separated the combatants. Before the light was strong enough to see distinctly, the Japanese field-batteries reopened with shrapnel on the crest of the mountain. This fire seemed to be causing considerable inconvenience and perhaps loss to their own countrymen, some of the shells appearing to burst right over them. This must have been the case, for an officer rushed on to a little knoll and, at the imminent risk of his life, unfurled a large white flag embroidered with the rising sun in red, and waved it vigorously. For some little time this had no effect: in all probability it was not easy for the gunners to see from the plain the true aspect of

affairs, and it was not until several other flags were raised that the artillery directed its fire elsewhere.

Throughout the morning the situation on Namakoyama remained the same: the farther advance of the Japanese in this quarter of the field was delayed to give time for the attack on 203 Metre Hill to develop. The 15th Regiment held the crest of the low hills to the west of 203 Metre Hill during the night of the 19th, but at 10 A.M. on the 20th they endeavoured to send a half-company forward to gain the shelter of the dead ground at the foot of the Russian position. The men, gallantly led by their officers, swept down the slope at a run, but keeping too close a formation were nearly wiped out by shrapnel. Then about forty or fifty more followed their comrades in more extended order, but they also shared the same fate, the Russian marksmen accounting for nearly all who escaped the shrapnel. Out of all who started, only two or three ever reached their destination. As for the rest, their bodies remained on the hillside, a gruesome monument to their wasted gallantry. Undeterred by the fate of their comrades, two officers started on their own account to make this dangerous and seemingly impossible passage. The eyes of both armies were on them, and all were loud in praise of their courage. They ran like rabbits, the bullets threw up little clouds of earth all around them, but still they escaped unscathed and reached their warren at the foot of the hill.

At half-past three in the afternoon the bombardment again became more general, and a rumour went round that the 1st Regiment would be called upon to assault the crest of Namakoyama as soon as the fire had had time to tell. The Russian artillery also

re-opened. A little before 5 P.M. a stir became evident among the soldiers of the 1st Regiment, who commenced to move their cramped limbs, and to fall in by companies two deep on any sheltered patch of ground. The sergeants dressed their men as if on parade and numbered them off, while the officers split into little groups and discussed the approaching assault, many shaking hands before parting. The colonel of the regiment stood by himself, a conspicuous object in his black overcoat,—the only man on the hill wearing a coat,—his hands clasped behind his back, and gazing intently towards the crest of the hill. Several officers, probably the company commanders, came up to him, saluted, said a few words, and then returned to their posts at the head of their companies, which had now fallen in and were standing at ease. The regimental standard, a great white flag embroidered with the rising sun in red, was unfurled. This was the signal for every company to unfurl a smaller flag of similar design, which was carried by the company ensign. It was an imposing sight at this moment: the sun shone on a forest of bayonets, and on the soldiers standing two deep, with rifles at the order, their arms crossed and their heads bent forward, waiting for the word of command to charge. The numerous flags fluttered in the stiff north wind, while the regimental standard stood out before all, angrily chafing at the pole that held it back. For the last time the Japanese artillery opened a furious fire of shrapnel on the summit of Namakoyama, which by its severity should have warned the defenders that something was about to happen.

For nearly half an hour—a long half-hour for those watching the scene, and probably still longer for the

actors in it—the soldiers stood motionless, gazing upwards at the steep slope they would so soon be called upon to climb. Then the artillery suddenly ceased, and without further warning the officer bearing the flag of the leading company climbed over the captured trench and led the way up the hill. The companies followed, not in long lines of straggling skirmishers, but each maintaining its close formation, two deep, bayonets at the charge, their captains with drawn sword a few yards in advance.

Here was an infantry charge after the manner of the wars of a hundred years ago — something supposed to have disappeared for ever from modern battlefields. Two thousand men were advancing with fixed bayonets in close formation, to prove to theorists how futile are their calculations when put to the test. The regiment presented a front of two companies as it moved up the slope, the right-hand one moving directly on the big gun, while the other extended the line to the left. The other companies fell in behind at quarter-column distance. Every minute one expected to see a volley from the crest sweep away the head of the leading formation; but somehow or other the Russians never discovered the advance until the infantry were right up to their trenches. Just before the leading company reached the summit, a Russian gunner stepped out from cover and fired the big, old-fashioned gun for the last time, and the next minute the Japanese were over the crest and slaughtering the gunners at their posts.

The infantry, who advanced to the attack in the formation of a hundred years ago, were destined to fight with the weapons in vogue still further back

in the eighteenth century, on the fields of Dettingen and Fontenoy. As each company reached the crest of the hill the men changed their rifles from their right hands to their left, and, instead of using either bayonet or bullet, they commenced to throw what at first sight appeared to be stones on to the heads of their astonished opponents. But these stones gave forth a yellow, evil-looking, sulphurous smoke, and then the well-kept secret was out: the Japanese also were employing hand-grenades charged with dynamite. Up to this time this primitive weapon had been employed only by the Russians. Each Japanese soldier carried three of these bombs, for experience had shown that the Russians always remained in their trenches until the very last moment, when the soldiers become so intermingled that it is almost impossible to use the rifle or bayonet. It had, therefore, been decided to experiment with the old-fashioned fuse grenade. The Russians on Namakoyama were so demoralised by this unexpected mode of attack that they allowed themselves to be disposed of without offering much resistance, but the Japanese suffered severely from a cross fire from 203 Metre Hill.

When the throwing of these grenades was at its height, the whole scene was more like a popular representation of hell than anything else. Namakoyama presented the appearance of a huge cauldron, from the centre of which clouds of yellow smoke were slowly ascending, caused by the explosion of countless bombs. In the midst of these fumes shells were bursting from both Japanese and Russian guns, while on the edge of the cauldron the Japanese soldiers, their figures showing up black against the

yellow smoke, were dancing about, some using the bayonet, some shooting at the Russians as they ran down the reverse side, while the majority, having exhausted their bombs, were hurling down stones and great lumps of rock in lieu of better ammunition. This strange scene did not in reality last longer than ten minutes: at the end of that time all the Russians were either dead, prisoners, or safely on the high road to Port Arthur. The rear companies of the 1st Regiment then wheeled to the right, and passed along the whole length of Namakoyama until they came under a heavy fire from 203 Metre Hill. Here their farther advance was checked, and they began hastily to throw up shelter trenches.

From 9 P.M. to 11 P.M. the assault on 203 Metre Hill was made by the 15th and 16th Regiments. It was, of course, impossible to see what was taking place, both on account of the darkness and of the intervening hills; but a little before midnight it was reported to General Matsumura that both peaks of 203 Metre Hill had been successfully occupied. On the morning of September 21 it was again reported that both peaks were in the possession of the Japanese. This was at 6 A.M.; but an hour later it was rumoured that a mistake had been made, and that only the south-western peak had been gained on the previous night. What really happened was that the Japanese infantry assaulted in much the same manner as they had assaulted Namakoyama; but when they entered the works the Russians hid under bomb-proof covered ways and picked them off from any available cover. The Russians, however, were cleared out of the south-west work at midnight, and this was reported to General Matsumura.

They could not be dislodged from the north-east work; and so remained in possession of one peak of 203 Metre Hill, while the Japanese held the other. During the 21st the Russians concentrated every available gun on the latter, absolutely smashing up the interior with their 10-inch shells, and causing terrible losses among the Japanese infantry, who could find no cover from this iron storm. To show the severity of this fire, it may be said that no less than 50 per cent of the casualties were caused by shells, and these amounted to over 3000 killed and wounded. On the 22nd it was decided by General Matsumura that he could no longer maintain his position; so the whole of 203 Metre Hill was evacuated, and the Japanese remained in possession of Namakoyama. This was a severe blow to General Nogi, who had hoped to be able to bombard Isusan from the captured hill, and also to command the road to Laoteshan. It led to a material alteration in his plans, for he decided, for the present at any rate, to abandon any further attempt on 203 Metre Hill and to concentrate his attack elsewhere. The attack on the extreme west completely failed; for although Namakoyama had been captured, it was a barren possession as long as 203 Metre Hill remained in the hands of the enemy.

It is now time to turn and follow the fortune of the forces attacking Fort Kouropatkin and the Suishien works, the assaults on which were made at the same time as those on Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill. At 7 A.M. on the morning of the 19th the Japanese commenced to shell Fort Kouropatkin at a slow rate, with 15- and 12-centimetre naval guns, from their main battery a mile in the rear, situated behind one of the

lower spurs of the mountain of Hoshsan. Their field-howitzers, and also a portion of their divisional artillery, assisted the naval guns. At 12.30 the bombardment was changed from slow to medium rate, and at 4 P.M. rapid fire was ordered by the general in command of the siege batteries. Since their last attack on Fort Kouropatkin the 18th Brigade had been busy pushing forward their parallels as close as possible to their objective, thus avoiding their former disastrous experience of having to advance for half a mile across the open under a heavy fire. On a little bluff, about 500 yards from Fort Kouropatkin, the engineers had erected a small redan, and from this their parallels had been advanced until they had reached a point not more than 100 yards from the enemy. The wire entanglement had also been cut at night by volunteers. For several nights preceding the assault individual soldiers had gone forward to search for mines, which were known to exist, and if possible to sever the connecting wires. One night a private soldier, creeping about between the lines, thought that at a particular spot the ground seemed to sound strangely hollow under the blows of his pick. He called a corporal, and the two scooped out the earth with their hands until they came to an electric contact box connecting the wires to the various mines. This they carried away, and then filled in the ground so skilfully that the Russians failed to discover that it had been tampered with. Three battalions of the 36th Regiment and one of the 19th were massed in these advanced parallels about 3 P.M. on the afternoon of the 19th. The Russian shrapnel played with considerable effect on these troops during the hours of waiting. Ground scouts were from time to time sent

forward to discover what effect the artillery fire had made on the infantry holding Fort Kouropatkin; but, although these men carried steel shields, they were always killed before reaching their destination. When the rapid fire opened at 4 P.M. the Russians were obliged to evacuate the fort, which was no longer tenable, and to take shelter among the ditches and nullahs near the work. The Japanese attacked one of these with a half-company at 5 P.M., and a severe infantry engagement took place, both sides using grenades freely. The Japanese gained the upper hand, obtained a lodgment in the nullah, and were reinforced until more than 500 men were concentrated in it. They were, however, only able to maintain their position for half an hour, and were then driven out by a counter-attack of the Russian infantry, losing, it is said, nearly all their flags, and suffering many casualties. The position of the combatants remained the same until night finally put an end to the fighting.

At 4 A.M. on the morning of the 20th the Japanese once more returned to the attack, and succeeded in driving away the Russian infantry after a feeble resistance. It seems that the grenades of the latter gave out, and discouraged by the absence of this weapon, the Russians did not fight with nearly so much vigour as on the preceding day. Immediately the infantry retired, the Japanese occupied Fort Kouropatkin. Directly it was light enough to see that the fort had changed hands, the Russian artillery opened a furious bombardment, smashing what was left of the timber and sandbags into a heap of rubbish. The infantry endeavoured to maintain their position; but as their losses were heavy it was decided to abandon Fort Kouropatkin and to occupy all the nullahs and

trenches near it, thus effectually preventing its recapture. Later in the morning the 19th Regiment followed up their success and captured the redoubt close to the water-supply known as the Liugen work. This completely unmasked the water-supply. The communicating pipes were immediately cut, and after September 20 the Russians had to rely on distilled water, or on wells. No attempt was made by the Japanese to keep men in Fort Kouropatkin after its capture. Being directly under the guns of the other forts it always drew their fire, and the interior was so utterly destroyed that it could not possibly be used as a defence work until after many weeks of labour.

While these operations were being carried out, the 3rd Regiment, under Colonel Usijima, was engaged in a similar attempt to capture the four Suishien works just to the south of the village of that name. All through the 19th the bombardment was kept up, but it was not until the morning of the 20th that the infantry advanced, and after severe fighting carried the east work D; but, like their comrades in the 9th Division, they were driven out again after twenty minutes. This check was, however, only temporary, for at 10 A.M. they again attacked, and on this occasion retained possession. Some of the soldiers, reinforced by those behind, advanced and captured the redoubt a little way to the west, work B. When these two works were captured the Russians became disheartened, and retreated down the main road to Port Arthur, abandoning the two other redoubts, A and B, to their victorious foe, who occupied them, and immediately became subjected to a severe bombardment from the forts in their rear.

All these redoubts were constructed in the same

manner,—the outside of earth, supported by timber and surmounted by sandbags. They were made very thick and strong, and, rising little above the ground, did not suffer much on the outside from artillery fire. The interior was divided into numerous bomb-proof shelters, dug out of the ground and supported by great beams. Across these, planks were laid, and on the top of the planks earth was piled up two or three feet high, and over the earth was placed a layer of sandbags. Sometimes two storeys were dug underground, the lower of which was usually used for storing ammunition. Inside these underground houses the Russians had lived for two months. The interior was filthy in the extreme: great-coats, underwear, old boots, forage caps, tools for cleaning rifles, oil bottles, broken rifles, packs of cards, and great loaves of black bread, lay mingled in hopeless confusion, just as their owners had left them when called upon to assist the infantry on the morning of the 20th. During a bombardment the Russians sit tight under cover of these bomb-proofs, leaving a few men looking through the loopholes to warn them against any attempt at assault. In several cases the shells, especially the high-angled-fire howitzers, had smashed in the bomb-proofs, and in one spot thirty Russians were killed by a single shell, which buried them under a heap of *débris*. The Russians fought bravely enough, but the crushing effect of the artillery fire was too much for them, and really brought about the evacuation of the position.

In the interior of the Suishien redoubts, and also in Fort Kouropatkin, several curious devices for resisting an attack were found. There were many ordinary fish torpedoes, taken from the fleet and brought in-

land to assist the soldiers once they had ceased to be of any service to the shattered squadron. How they were intended to be used remains a mystery, for they were not put to the test in either of the engagements, and fell into the hands of the Japanese with their mission unaccomplished. They have now gone to swell the divisional museums, in which various warlike trophies, sent to Japan to arouse the martial ardour of the new recruits, are collected. There were also many mines scattered about, and at Suishien a big sea mine, similar to that which sunk the *Hatsuse*, was found lying in the open. The Japanese are deplorably careless about unexploded shells and mines, and left this one where they found it, so that it was always liable to explode amongst their own men.

The capture of Fort Kouropatkin cost the hard-hit 9th Division 1000 men. Throughout the campaign the losses of this division were enormous, and at this time reached a grand total of close on 10,000 killed, wounded, and sick, after only two months' fighting, the division not having landed at Dalny until the end of July.

Taken as a whole, the plan of operations adopted by General Nogi for his second attempt on the fortress was successful. The attack on 203 Metre Hill failed, and was then abandoned for good in favour of a more concentrated attack on the eastern perimeter of forts; but on the other hand the Russians were driven entirely out of the Suishien valley, their redoubts were all captured, and their main water-supply completely cut off. What was more important than any other consideration, the Japanese engineers could now push forward their saps against the main line of defence and prepare the way for an infantry assault on the forts themselves.

A 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZER,
SHOWING THE METHOD OF LOADING.

CHAPTER XII.

ARTILLERY AND TELEPHONES.

The absence of heavy siege-guns was a subject of much remark in the early stages of the siege. It seemed only natural that the Japanese, with their usual thoroughness of preparation, would have prepared against the day when heavy guns would be required to bombard the fortifications of Port Arthur, even though it was the intention of the General Staff to rush the fortress. In the series of assaults in August, the Japanese infantry were assisted by guns and howitzers of very inadequate calibre, the heaviest of which were only 6-inch howitzers and 4·7 naval guns. Considerable damage was inflicted on the outlying Russian works and on the semi-permanent positions, such as Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West. The latter two works were in fact sufficiently damaged by the fire of these guns to enable the infantry to carry them by assault. It was, however, a very different matter when the time came to bombard permanent forts such as North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan. The direct-fire guns could inflict practically no damage on the interior of these positions, and the only way in which the inside could be broken up was by howitzers of heavy calibre. It was reported

that the howitzers destined for use before Port Arthur were lost in the *Hitachi Maru* when she was sunk by the Vladivostok Squadron in June. There would seem to be some truth in this, for it is the only satisfactory explanation of these howitzers not being in position round Port Arthur before the very end of September. Early in that month there were rumours of a speedy resumption of active operations, and it was said that General Nogi was only waiting the arrival of his siege artillery to commence a new attack. On September 9 the first of these howitzers reached the besiegers' lines. They were brought up from Dalny by train to the rail-head just beyond General Nogi's headquarters, and there, with the assistance of a tripod, each gun was lowered on to four little carriages. Each carriage had four wheels about 18 inches in diameter, with tyres 6 inches wide, to prevent them sinking into the soft ground when carrying a weight of fifteen tons, which they were called upon to bear. The howitzers had the breech-blocks taken out of them, and were carefully packed at either end in wood casing, to prevent injury in course of transit. The breech-blocks and carriages were brought up separately. Suitable positions had been chosen for the howitzers some time before their arrival. A gang of soldiers met each gun at the rail-head and lowered it down on to the temporary carriages by the aid of the tripod. Then commenced the arduous task of dragging the load for the last two or three miles to its chosen position. As many as five hundred soldiers were necessary to move these howitzers a distance of fifty yards in an hour. Long ropes were fastened to them, and hand-lines attached to the long one: these the Japanese placed over their shoulders, and at the word of command com-

menced to pull all together. Frequently, if the road was soft, the gun would get stuck, and fresh gangs of men had to be brought up to start it again. The Japanese soldiers set about this laborious task with the greatest willingness, for they fully appreciated how the advent of these monsters would lighten their labours and hasten the fall of the fortress. The carriages of the 28-centimetre howitzers were mounted on a solid bed of Portland cement, hundreds of barrels of which were brought up to the front for this purpose. The cement required about a fortnight to harden before the gun could be fired, so it is easy to realise the immensity of the task which the Japanese set themselves in placing eighteen of these howitzers in position round the fortress. The four which were sent to the west had to be conveyed a distance of over ten miles from the rail-head, dragged by hand, at the rate I have described, every inch of the route. These howitzers could be fired at an angle of forty degrees, and they were sighted up to 10,000 yards: the breech end measured 28 inches in diameter, and the muzzle 14 inches. They were made by the Japanese themselves in Osaka. The shells for these 11-inch howitzers each weighed 550 lb., and cost £100. In the course of the siege 36,000 of them were fired into Port Arthur, in addition to a million and a half of other shells.

The positions chosen for the howitzers were behind steep hills, in close proximity to the Russian forts. It was possible, on account of their high-angle-fire, to place them very close to the foot of the hills, and they thus were protected from the shell-fire concentrated on them from the enemy's forts. The method of directing the fire was as follows. On the top of

some hill in the neighbourhood of each howitzer battery a bomb-proof shelter was constructed, and one of the officers took up a permanent position there during day and night. He would follow the course of each shell through his telescope, which was marked into sections by lines across the lens. The result of each shot was taken down on paper by a non-commissioned officer, and the man at the telephone on the top of the hill described exactly what was necessary to correct the aim of the next round. In this manner, as long as the guns were engaged in bombarding the Russian forts, the aim was generally good, because there was sufficient time to follow the course of each shell and give instructions before the next was fired. But it was frequently to be noticed during a great assault that the aim was not so accurate. This was no doubt due partly to the smoke hanging over the Russian positions, to the excitement which must always accompany an infantry attack, and to the continual firing wearing out the rifling of the guns. The heavy howitzers, and the other guns as well, would frequently drop their shells right among their own infantry as they closed with the Russian entrenchments, and hundreds of lives must have been lost to the Japanese army from this cause during the siege. So close were the combatants that it is hard to see how these mistakes could have been avoided; nevertheless, once the Japanese had set out to take a position, they were very careless and prodigal of human life. It was never a pleasant sight to see these great 11-inch shells falling in the midst of companies of Japanese infantry, as they sat in a captured position or just outside it; and during the assault of October 30 the hundreds of wounded lying about the Russian works were exposed

not only to the fire of the Russian guns, but also to that of their own artillery.

The positions chosen for the 28-centimetre howitzers are marked on the map which accompanies this book. It will be seen that four were placed side by side behind the divisional ridge, close to the headquarters of the 9th Division. This battery was only about 1000 yards away from the nearest point of the Russian lines. Two more, it will be noticed, were placed behind the shelter of Danjanshi on the right of the Shell Strewn Road. The battery at the headquarters of the 9th Division and the battery behind Danjanshi were exactly in line with one another. It was of great importance to the Japanese to conceal the position of the four guns near the 9th Division, and placed in such proximity to the front, because the Russians could concentrate a very effective shell-fire upon them. These four guns therefore fired smokeless powder during the siege, which shortens the life of a gun very considerably. The two guns behind Danjanshi, immediately behind those of the 9th Division, fired black powder, and every time they were discharged a cloud of white smoke ascended above the hill, marking the position of the battery. For a long time this ruse succeeded admirably, and the Russians thought that all the shells in reality fired from the battery near the 9th Division were fired from the guns behind Danjanshi. A battery of two 28-centimetre guns was in position near the headquarters of the 11th Division. Four more were placed behind the hill close to where the railroad entered the Suishien valley, and another battery of two guns was also in position at this point. Fourteen of the howitzers are thus accounted for; the other four

were conveyed to the west and placed near the headquarters of the 1st Division. On the fall of Port Arthur a very noticeable fact was the number of unexploded 28-centimetre shells lying about the Russian works. It would seem that the shells might have had a percussion fuse in front with advantage; but the fuse was in every case in the back of the shell, which accounted for the large number unexploded. No time-fuses were used.

An enumeration of the guns, howitzers, and mortars employed by the Japanese before Port Arthur will give a fair idea of the colossal nature of the siege operations. In the middle of October over 400 guns were in position facing the Russian forts. The number was made up as follows. Four 6-inch naval guns were worked by sailors, survivors of the unfortunate battleship *Hatsuse*. The position of these will be found marked on the map near a point where the highroad enters the Suishien valley. Ten naval 4·7's were distributed along the front among the hills forming the Japanese artillery line. They will also be found marked on the map. There were also twenty 12-pounder naval guns. Four 10·5 centimetre Krupp guns were placed among the hills to the north of the Suishien valley. To these must be added thirty bronze guns, and six 8·7 centimetre Krupp guns captured from the Russians at Nanshan, which however were only employed for a short time. The guns of the field artillery numbered 108, and were distributed at various points in the Suishien valley, carefully masked from the fire of the forts. The Japanese also employed seventy-two mountain guns, which were concealed in the most unexpected places, occasionally quite close to the Russian works. They were placed in the trenches and the

captured lunettes, and sometimes suffered considerably from the effects of the Russian shrapnel-fire at close quarters. This makes a total of 254 guns before the fortress.

The howitzers employed by the besiegers numbered sixty-two in all, and were made up as follows: eighteen 28-centimetre, the position of which I have already described; sixteen 15-centimetre; and twenty-eight 12-centimetre. All these howitzers were placed in carefully selected positions behind hills, in as close proximity as possible to the forts. One hundred and sixty mortars were also distributed along the front, in the neighbourhood of the divisional ridge. This made up a grand total of 474 guns, howitzers, and mortars, employed before the fortress in October; but to this number must be added the field artillery of the 7th Division, which did not reach the front until November, bringing up the grand total to over 500.

The greatest organiser in the world is the telephone; and that instrument in the hands of the Japanese has revolutionised modern warfare. All the 500 guns round Port Arthur were in direct communication with the headquarters of the Chief of Artillery. To enter the sacred precincts of the Chief of Artillery's observation station was a difficult task, as strangers were not welcome. In order to approach his dwelling it was necessary to negotiate a very steep hill, near the crest of which you entered a whitewashed passage. Turning a corner, you suddenly found yourself in a spacious room, eighteen feet square, cut out of the side of the hill. The walls were of cement, and kept beautifully clean. In the centre of the room was a table made of blue slate, painted white and polished. Above the table was a narrow tunnel, which

passed through the roof to the camera obscura outside. On this table was reflected a section of the fortifications, and fresh views constantly came into the field of vision as the camera swept the horizon. The nearest approach to the scene inside is to be found in Mr Gillette's representation of Sherlock Holmes, where Professor Moriarty is seen sitting in his underground cellar, surrounded by his minions and their telephones, and organising murders and robberies all over London, without moving from his seat. Before Port Arthur, in the place of Professor Moriarty, sat the Chief of the Artillery of the besieging army, and the power he possessed, for good or evil, was far greater than that of the immortal professor. Against the side of one of the walls were placed the receiving instruments, and opposite each instrument sat an orderly, transmitting or receiving messages from all parts of the field.

All the guns before Port Arthur were divided up among the various divisions; and the guns, scattered over the ground covered by a particular division, were under the direct command of the artillery commander of that division. When the 7th Division arrived on the scene in November, the guns were divided up into four sections, apportioned respectively to the 1st, 7th, 9th, and 11th Divisions. The artillery commander of each section was represented in the observation station of the Chief of Artillery by an orderly seated in front of one of the telephones. The artillery commanders thus received their orders direct from the Chief of Artillery, and it was their duty to transmit his orders to the various batteries under their command. Much latitude was allowed the battery commanders, so that, if some favourable mark presented itself, time was not lost in telephoning through to ask permission

to fire: the firing was done first, and an explanation sent afterwards. It was only during the great assaults, when it became necessary at times to concentrate the fire of many guns on some particular point, that the advantage of this elaborate system of communication between the Chief of Artillery and the batteries was manifested.

The observation station of the Chief of Artillery was connected by telephone to various points in the front line, so that he could be informed immediately of what was occurring and direct the fire of his batteries accordingly. When an assault on some position was taking place, it was of the utmost importance that the Chief of Artillery should be kept continually informed of the progress of the attack and the accuracy of the fire of his guns. In order to keep up this communication the following method was adopted by the Japanese. Each regiment possessed a certain number of trained telephonists—for the Japanese infantryman is part infantryman, part engineer, and understands many other special subjects as well. The regimental telephonists followed immediately in rear of the firing line, and laid the telephone wire over the least exposed and most advantageous ground. When a point had been reached where no farther progress could be made with the main wire, a stake was stuck in the ground, to which it was attached. The ten or twenty men who had laid the wire carried each an instrument and two or three hundred yards of slack wire on his person, and this was attached to the main wire at the stake-head. The men then spread out in the firing line, and it was the duty of each man to take as much care as possible of his life, but at the same time to do his best to see what was happening around him.

Each man in the firing line was on the same circuit as his comrades, and thus each could hear what the other was saying. It was possible to pass messages along the front of the firing line in this manner; but the primary object of the telephonists during the operations before Port Arthur was to keep the Chief of Artillery informed of the effect of the shell-fire and the position of affairs in the front line. Thus, strange though it may seem, the Chief of Artillery, on a hill miles in rear of the fighting line, could carry on a conversation with men who were often killed while in the middle of a sentence. If one of the telephonists heard a comrade suddenly cease to speak whilst transmitting a message, he would at once know that he had been killed, and it would then become his duty to pass on the remainder of the sentence to the best of his ability. In many of the attacks the majority of the telephone orderlies would be killed, but one or two were almost certain to survive to carry on the grim tale along the wire. Thus spread out, like the feelers of an octopus, among the soldiers of the firing line, the telephone collected scattered scraps of information from all points and communicated the news, good or bad, to the Chief of Artillery, sitting in his observation station miles away in the rear.

During the great assaults on Port Arthur General Nogi often took up his position with the Chief of Artillery; but supposing the General chose some other position, the Chief of Artillery and General Nogi each had round his neck a framework and receiver similar to that used by the orderlies. They were thus in direct communication with one another. A single wire also connected the balloon to the Chief of Artillery. The balloon cost £100 every time it went up, and

proved of little use. The officer in charge had gone through a course at Aldershot. Moreover, the Chief of Artillery was in direct communication with Marshal Oyama's headquarters at Liaoyang, or wherever they might happen to be; so that if the Marshal wished to know the result of a shot, he would receive the desired information within two or three minutes after it was fired. It must have been intensely exciting for the General Staff in the north to listen to an account of one of the great assaults on Port Arthur coming over the wire, minute by minute, as the Japanese soldiers placed their scaling-ladders against the escarpments and endeavoured to force their way into the forts.

One of the most difficult problems which the Japanese had to face during the siege was keeping the five hundred guns, howitzers, and mortars, supplied with ammunition. The ammunition was brought up from Dalny by railway to the rail-head close to General Nogi's headquarters. All supplies were unloaded at Chorashi Station; but the Japanese subsequently repaired the line for another four miles and established their rail-head in closer proximity to the front. Alongside the rail-head a wooden platform was erected, and close to the platform the reserve depot for the ammunition was established. Here the shells were unloaded and placed in the sheds pending their distribution to the various batteries. In order to facilitate the distribution of ammunition the Japanese placed a hand-railway round their lines. It ran behind the lines from the rail-head right away to the west. Branch lines were constructed up to all the batteries of the 28-centimetre howitzers and the heavy naval guns, which were then kept constantly supplied with ammunition. The rail-head and reserve ammunition

depot were about two miles away from the Russian forts, and well within range of their guns. The hills, however, concealed both from view; nevertheless the Russian gunners frequently dropped shells in the neighbourhood. They were, however, aimed at General Nogi's headquarters, not at the ammunition depot, because it subsequently transpired that the Russians had not found out the position of the rail-head, but they had an inkling of the locality of General Nogi's headquarters from the reports of the Chinese spies.

The task of supplying the big howitzers in the neighbourhood of the 9th and 11th Divisions was not so difficult, the distance to be covered never exceeding two and a half or three miles. But it was a very different thing to convey shells to the four 28-centimetre guns in the neighbourhood of the 1st Division, for it meant that each shell had to be pulled along the hand-railway for a distance of nearly fifteen miles. The little cars, which were drawn by some half-dozen soldiers, could carry three shells to the car: this meant a load of 1500 lb., besides the weight of the car. The task was not so difficult as long as the ground was level, but it was hard work dragging the cars over some of the hills. Nevertheless the Japanese soldier was able to extract some fun out of even this prosaic task of rolling 500-lb. shells along an iron rail. Whenever they came to a decline, the soldiers would sit on the top of the shells and let the car run down at full speed and up the other side like a switchback railway. Sometimes the weight was too great, and the car would not surmount the incline, and would commence to roll back again. Then the soldiers had to get off and pull it up with their ropes. They displayed their usual carelessness in

JAPANESE SOLDIERS DRAGGING UP AMMUNITION TO THEIR BATTERIES ON THE HAND-RAIL.

handling these big shells, and it was a wonder that many lives were not lost in the journeys to the guns. I recollect one instance where the soldiers sat on a car and rushed it down the incline and up the other side. Unfortunately the momentum was not sufficient, and the car commenced to roll backwards. Meanwhile another car had been started from the top of the hill, and as it was quite impossible to avert disaster, the two met at the bottom with a fearful crash. The shells rolled off, and one of the cars was overturned. The soldiers and the ammunition rolled about on the ground in a confused mass, but luckily there was no explosion. The men soon replaced the car on the line, picked up the shells, and resumed their journey, laughing like children, as if the matter were a joke, and not one that might have led to a horrible accident.

In spite of their elaborate arrangements for distributing the ammunition, the Japanese batteries frequently ran short of ammunition after a heavy bombardment. This was noticeably the case during the attack of October 30.

CHAPTER XIII.

MEN AND MANNERS.

After the successful capture of Namakoyama, Fort Kouropatkin, and the four redoubts to the south of the village of Suishien, there was another interval of nearly a month before any further fighting of a serious nature took place. There were many reasons for this delay. In the first place, it was necessary to await the arrival of the howitzers, all of which had not then reached the front. Nogi determined to make preparations for a great assault on October 30, on the eastern section of the line of fortifications running from Shojusan to Higashi Keikwansan, if the preliminary arrangements could be made by that date. This would give his army the chance of capturing the fortress in time for the Emperor's birthday on November 3. It must be borne in mind, however, that in order to attack Nirusan and Shojusan it was first of all necessary to sap up against those two positions, and that necessitated a great deal of fresh work for the engineers. On account of the Russians holding Fort Kouropatkin, the Liugen work, and the four redoubts to the south of the village of Suishien, it had not, up till then, been possible to approach the foot of the hills on which those two works were built. Time was re-

TWO OF THE 28-CENTIMETRE HOWITZERS NEAR THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 9TH DIVISION.

quired to enable the Japanese engineers to sap their way from the captured positions in the Suishien valley up to the foot of the forts themselves, and the end of September and beginning of October passed in much the same manner as the end of August and beginning of September.

The first shot from one of the 28-centimetre howitzers was fired on September 28: it was purely a trial effort, the shots being directed at the fort of Roritushi, in the extreme east, which was not otherwise subjected to any attack during the siege. Captain Saxe, the chief officer of submarine mining in Port Arthur, told me after the capitulation of the effect that the first of these monster high-explosive shells had on the spirits of the garrison. At first it was thought that the shell had been fired from one of the warships, or from a gunboat in Pigeon Bay, but a speedy examination of the fragments of the shell showed clearly that it had come from a high-angled-fire gun such as are not carried in warships. Then for the first time it dawned on the garrison that the Japanese had succeeded in bringing some gun of exceptionally large calibre up to the front, and that thenceforth they would have this new factor to contend with. This was a great blow to the Russians, because up to that time they had dwelt in a fool's paradise, believing that it was not possible for the Japanese to bring up any gun larger than a 6-inch. The fortifications of Port Arthur had been constructed on the principle that they would never be called upon to face anything larger than a 6-inch gun or howitzer. A 6-inch gun fires a shell weighing 100 lb., and the arrival of a shell weighing 500 lb. caused the garrison grave apprehensions as to the

stability of their fortifications to withstand this new attack.

On September 28 I had an opportunity of visiting for the first time the captured redoubts to the south of the village of Suishien, taken from the Russians on the 20th and 21st. It cost the 3rd Regiment 500 men to capture these positions, and they buried 100 Russians left dead in the passages and covered ways. It was fairly safe to enter these works, for the Japanese engineers had already constructed trenches leading right up to them; but as they were situated immediately under the guns of Forts Nirusan, Shojusan, Shiyoanchisan, and Isusan, it was not very pleasant to remain there long, as shells were continually breaking through the already partly destroyed covered ways and passages.

After the repulse of the Japanese from 203 Metre Hill on September 21 and 22, General Nogi abandoned for the time being any further attempt to take that position, and concentrated his attention on the eastern section of the fortifications, leaving the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division in the west, while the 2nd Brigade of that division was brought down to sap against Shojusan. Every night firing broke out at different points along the line, as the Japanese engineers drew nearer to the foot of the doomed forts. They had a great obstacle to surmount in the railway embankment which passes at the foot of the slopes of Nirusan and Shojusan, and which was strongly held by the Russians. On the afternoon of October 9 the Japanese were successful in driving the Russians from the embankment at the foot of Nirusan, and from that date it became their advanced line, and provided splendid cover from which they could press forward up the slope of the

hill. I did not see this attack delivered, because on that afternoon General Nogi invited all the correspondents attached to his army to lunch with him at headquarters.

The General provided a very interesting entertainment, and was most kind and affable. No one could be more charming than Nogi, and on this occasion he outdid himself. All the officers of his Staff were present; the band played, and conjuring tricks and dancing followed the lunch. During luncheon the artillery commenced to bombard the Russian forts, to keep down their fire while the infantry were making their attack on the embankment. A very heavy rifle-fire broke out almost immediately afterwards, and to any stranger who had not followed the course of the siege from the commencement, it must have appeared as if some great engagement was in progress. I must confess that the firing led me to suppose that something out of the ordinary was taking place; but General Nogi sat with the utmost composure, handing round sweets out of a bottle which had been sent him on the previous day by his wife. When I made inquiries about the firing, which was every minute increasing in volume, I was always met with the same reply, "It is only a small affair, not worth seeing."

Looking back now, the whole scene appears incongruous to a degree. Half a mile away all the guns were engaged in a furious bombardment: you could hear the shriek of the Russian shells as they answered the Japanese guns shot for shot, while every now and again one would burst in the neighbourhood of headquarters. The rifle and machine-gun fire was increasing every minute in volume as the

18th Brigade attempted to drive the Russians away from the embankment. In the small garden of the Chinese farm the luncheon-table was laid out, covered with bottles, some empty and some full. Gathered round were numerous officers, comprising the whole Headquarters Staff of the army engaged in conducting "the greatest siege in history," as it has been not inaccurately described; also the correspondents attached to the army. In one corner were many Russian shells, picked up and brought into headquarters for the general's inspection; also a Russian pick, almost completely worn away from the amount of digging it had accomplished. In another corner the band was playing selections from the "Geisha," "Toreador," and other musical comedies which have delighted the world for years. In an arm-chair sat Nogi himself, with a look of wonder on his face, as Mr Reginald Glossop of Yorkshire showed him numerous conjuring tricks. He swallowed the general's watch and chain, produced coins from the most unexpected parts of the general's dress, also from the general's beard, and then proceeded to swallow the general's Samurai sword. This was too much for one of the A.D.C.'s, who, I think, rescued the sword just as the hilt was disappearing down the throat of the inimitable Mr Glossop. The latter, disappointed at not being allowed to swallow the sword, borrowed it and another, and did a sword-dance amid great applause. All this time the guns were booming, the infantry were busy, shells were bursting, and many men were biting the dust, a mile and a half away.

Even the historic Waterloo Ball pales into comparative insignificance before this strange scene; for although many officers may have gone to the front on

that occasion in their dancing-shoes, the Duchess of Richmond and her guests were not engaged in producing coins from all parts of Wellington's uniform, nor did Her Grace swallow his watch, chain, and sword; and, after all, Waterloo was some twenty miles away, while here we were right on the battlefield, on which scenes of horrid carnage were being at that moment enacted. General Nogi shouldered the Russian pick, almost worn away from constant use, and said he valued it very much because it would set such an example to his own soldiers of the manner in which they should dig. He went on, "I do not think our men are as good at making entrenchments as the Russians; they are apt to be lazy and to neglect their digging. Every morning I wake up I think of General Stoessel, and what a hard time he must be having inside the fortress. I feel very much for him and his brave soldiers." This was said in such a charming and genuine manner that you could see it was sincere. Late in the afternoon this strange gathering broke up, and many strolled out to watch the engagement.

I paid several visits to the captured positions during this period of waiting, including Banrhusan East. Of late this fort had been neglected by the Russians, but still the artillery from time to time bombarded it, rendering it very uncomfortable for the garrison, which was a large one. The interior presented an extraordinary appearance. So completely had it been smashed up in the numerous bombardments, attacks, and counter-attacks, that it was no longer possible to trace the lines of the original fortifications, and the Japanese soldiers had dug new trenches in among the ruins and placed boards over them to afford some

shelter from the shrapnel-fire. It was a dog's life in Banrhusan East, and no wonder the soldiers in it looked "jumpy," worn, and anxious. On all sides were evidences of the terrible fighting which had taken place in and around it,—broken rifles and twisted Russian bayonets, bent double from being driven through Japanese soldiers. The Russians use the long three-cornered bayonet, similar to the one which caused so much complaint in the British army after Abu Klea. The Japanese carry the new, and now almost universal, knife-bayonet, which nothing bends. Creeping up cautiously through the trenches on the summit of the work, you came to the most advanced trench facing Bodai. Here it was well to be especially careful. Looking out through the loop-holes, you saw the bodies of many of those who had fallen in the August assaults, now little more than bone and uniform, for the sun did its work quickly in the hot climate. Two or three Japanese soldiers, acting as sentries, were gazing across the patch of ground separating them from the Chinese Wall, where the Russians were waiting to resist any further attack. I did not remain long in this position, for the stench was unbearable from the dead bodies, that lay not only in front but all over Banrhusan East, many corpses being scattered amidst the heaps of ruins. Whenever a Russian shell burst it was almost certain to kill some one, for they could fire right down on to the top of the position. Coming back I saw a horrible sight, for a shell had just burst and had burnt all the clothing off an unfortunate soldier. So terribly was he injured that, as far as I could see, he had no skin left on the upper part of his body, which was ghastly to look at. The surgeons, three in number,

were busy bandaging him all over, and while this was being done the poor wretch groaned in a horrible manner. There was little chance of saving him, for there was no oil-bath in which he could be placed; and after his first dressing he would have to be carried back some five miles, and then put on a train to be taken to Dalny. Every hour of the day scenes such as this were enacted; and a few days later the Spanish military attaché was wounded in the leg while visiting Banrhusan East, a shell bursting and dislodging a stone which broke a small bone. In this fetid atmosphere of decaying bodies, and amidst horrors such as I have attempted to describe, the garrison of Banrhusan East passed night and day.

Early in October the saps leading up to the foot of Nirusan and Shojusan were so far completed that it became possible to walk right round the front of the eastern section of the lines of forts chosen for attack, namely, that extending from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan. Miles and miles of trenches, running across the Suishien valley, were all finished and connected with one another, forming a complete network of passages seven or eight feet in height, and two, three, or four feet wide. In these semi-underground channels thousands and thousands of soldiers lived entirely hidden from view, and it was only when one entered and passed round them that any conception could be formed of the gigantic nature of the undertaking, and the curious existence led by the thousands of men who daily thronged the hidden labyrinth. The two hostile armies along this eastern section of the forts were living separated from one another by a distance varying from one hundred to only thirty yards in places, and it was a curious

sensation to walk in the Japanese advanced trenches and feel that only thirty yards away the enemy were engaged in almost exactly the same occupation. The daily scene in the front trenches was full of life, animation, and novel incident, and never became monotonous. In the trenches night was turned into day, and day into night; for the chances of either side attempting an attack or sortie in the daytime were so remote that both sides were able to relax their vigilance somewhat, and the worn-out soldiers eagerly sought that opportunity for repose. At night it was different, for then sorties were made, to destroy a half-completed sap, or the engineers crept from cover to push one nearer to the enemy. Incidents of this sort kept both armies, along their wide front, on the *qui vive* almost every night; although, after the experience of the night of August 23, it was extremely unlikely that any serious attempt would be made to carry any of the positions in the darkness, on account of the confusion which must inevitably arise. If firing broke out at any point along the line, the men everywhere would spring to attention, and stand ready to repel an attack. This nerve-destroying work at last came to such a pitch that, frequently, if a single shot disturbed the peace and quiet of the night, soldiers along the trenches would fire volleys indiscriminately towards their opponents, and for several minutes a furious fusilade would awake every one for miles around, suggesting that a serious attempt was being made to rush the fortress. After a few minutes the firing would cease, and a period of comparative calm ensue, until another alarm caused it to break out with renewed fury.

Very often the rifle-fire would get on the nerves of

the gunners, and they would commence to bombard that portion of the line from which the sound came, as a hint to the combatants that they had better cease fire and resume their slumbers, and not arouse the guns to fury. A few stray shots from the big guns would generally have a salutary effect on the Russian sharpshooters, who were not anxious to draw the fire of the guns during the night as well as the day. It was strange to see the shells bursting at night, because it was quite impossible to tell from which battery a shell was fired. If you fixed your eye on the forts during one of these nocturnal bombardments you would suddenly see a burst of red flame, followed by white smoke, and no sound would be heard until some seconds later. For six months hardly a minute of the night or day passed without some firing. I cannot recollect ever waking up, at any hour of the night, without hearing the crackle of rifle-fire from the front trenches, or the roar of one of the guns of the besiegers. When the siege was over the death-like silence was very strange, and you positively longed to hear a gun fired. This was especially the case with the soldiers in the advanced lines, who found the silence at first unbearable. Lieutenant Hori, the A.D.C. to General Oshima, told me that it had the same effect on the whole of the Staff of the 9th Division, who felt as if something had been lost which they longed to recover.

In the daytime the scene in the front trenches was very different—gay, animated, and full of life. The sun works wonders on the spirits of men engaged in desperate enterprises: by October the cold of the nights already indicated the advent of winter. A walk round the trenches, accompanied by a staff

officer who knew the road, was always an agreeable experience of which you could never grow tired. It was very essential to take a guide, otherwise you might lose your way and stroll right out of the trenches into the Suishien valley, to be immediately shot at by some watchful marksman. The trenches were dug into the ground to a depth of about four feet, and about two or three feet wide. The soil thus removed was placed in canvas sacks which were piled up in front, rising to a height of another four feet. The sandbags were not placed immediately flush with the wall of the ditch, but a little in front of it, thus leaving a ledge or platform about a foot wide, on which a man could recline or sit, out of the way of the officers and men continually passing through the trenches. The soldiers could crouch on the ledge and fire through the loopholes, which were about three feet up, near the top of the sandbags. These loopholes were made in the next row of sandbags below the top, by leaving a space of about four or five inches between two sandbags. Loopholes are very hard to see, even at short distances, and the best way to distinguish them is by looking for a spot in your opponent's trench where the light comes through. Keep your eye fixed on this little square of light, and get your rifle nicely trained on the spot; wait until the light becomes obscured; then you know that some one has blocked up the hole by placing his head or some other part of his body in the aperture for the purpose of observing what the enemy is doing. Hesitate no longer, but pull the trigger, and if your aim has been correct the light in your front will reappear, and the enemy is one man short. So dangerous was it to look through the loopholes separated from the Russians by so short a dis-

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A JAPANESE SAP FULL OF SOLDIERS CLOSE UP TO THE RUSSIAN LINES.

tance that only the sentries, or men engaged in sharpshooting, ever attempted to do so. The Japanese used to fill up the loopholes with pieces of rock, and whenever they desired to look through they would withdraw the rock and substitute their heads, not allowing the light to appear for more than a second: thus the Russians could not tell exactly where the loopholes were situated, and had to fire at random. I have never been round any of the trenches without coming upon the bodies of soldiers, in nearly all cases shot through the head while carelessly exposing themselves more than was necessary at the loopholes.

The front trenches, packed with men, were not conducive to comfort or good living, and in making your way round you had to jump over prostrate forms, some asleep on the ledge and others lying in the centre of the pathway. Occasionally you would miss your footing and tread on one of these sleeping forms, drawing a curse or a groan, as the sufferer turned uneasily in his sleep, wondering if a shell or bayonet had disturbed his slumbers. Many men sat in groups and discussed events with serious faces, such as the Japanese soldier alone knows how to assume, giving vent to strange guttural sounds, shrugging their shoulders and bringing their heads down half way to meet them, at the same time assuming a quizzical expression, when some point arose which they failed to understand, or some stranger passed whom they had not seen before. Each man had his leather cigarette case, from which he lit cigarette after cigarette, one from the stump of the other. These Japanese cigarettes are made from a special tobacco, and contain some chemical which causes them to light very easily,

and also imparts a strange taste to the palate after smoking one or two. They are fat, with paper holders, similar to the Russian cigarette; they burn very easily, and take about a minute to smoke. The soldiers bought them in packets costing three different prices, each particular brand being distinguished by the colour of the paper wrapper. If my recollection serves me right, each packet contained twenty-five cigarettes, the cheaper brand costing only six sen, or three cents gold a packet, and the better sorts seven sen and eight sen respectively. Another group of soldiers would be handing round sweets or Japanese cakes to one another, laughing and talking like children. In what other army in the world would the private soldiers sit sucking sweets within thirty yards of the enemy? The sweets are of all sorts and descriptions; as long as the article contains plenty of sugar it does not much matter what the other ingredients are. The Japanese are exceedingly fond of chocolate, but it is not a national article with them, and was not sold in their army canteens. Their cakes do not, as a rule, find much favour with Europeans,—a favourite speciality tasting like sawdust stuck together with glue, with a little sugar added, and looking exactly like one of those fire-lighters which delight the heart of the housemaid on a cold winter morning. Long thick sticks of this strange mixture could be bought for ten sen, and were eagerly devoured by the Japanese troops. Occasionally you would find a soldier engaged in writing a letter to his parents, or wife, or favourite geisha; but they are not much addicted to writing letters, for they bid farewell to their friends and relatives for good and all when they leave for the war. In one respect the Japanese officer or soldier differs but little from

his European brother-in-arms, for he carries with him to war innumerable pictures of his best girls, and shows them to you with evident pride and enjoyment. One colonel showed me thirty-two pictures of geishas he had brought with him to the front, all signed, and insisted on my judging which of the lot was the best looking. As soon as I had made the choice he insisted upon my keeping her photograph as a souvenir. Post-cards are very much *en evidence* among the Japanese, and the local beauties are photographed and stuck on to these post-cards, which are then posted by friends and relatives in Japan to delight the heart of the soldier at the front.

At intervals along the trench lines maxims were placed, carefully trained on any point where the Russians might be likely to make a sortie. A strange weapon was also to be found in the trenches, which was the product of the brain of some engineer officer, and which I do not suppose has been seen in modern warfare for hundreds of years. This was a wooden mortar, bound round with laths to strengthen it, and fired from a touch-hole at the end. Its bore was about six or eight inches; it measured two feet in length, and was fitted on to a wooden carriage. This mortar was used to fire hand-grenades at the enemy's trenches. In the September attacks the experiment was tried of supplying the soldiers with some hand-grenades to hurl at the Russians when they came to close quarters, as it was found that the latter always remained in their trenches right up to the last minute. It was very difficult to drive them out over a wall of sandbags with just the rifle and bayonet, especially as the Russians themselves employed hand-grenades. I have already described how the Japanese employed their hand-

grenades in the attack on Namakoyama, and also on the redoubts in the Suishien valley. However, the hand-grenade was not found to be of much use, as an attacking force never can tell the exact moment at which they are going to arrive within throwing distance, and the grenades, which were fired by a fuse, either exploded in the hands of the men who were carrying them or else had to be thrown away without being used. Under these circumstances the Japanese troops abandoned carrying grenades in attack; and instead one of the engineers designed this wooden mortar, the idea being for two soldiers to carry it forward in attack and fire it when they came within a suitable distance. The charge of powder was placed in the gun, and then many hand-grenades were placed loosely in it, a match was applied to the touch-hole, and the grenades were launched towards the enemy. The aim was not, as a rule, very good, and I do not think much harm was ever done; but it made a fine show, such as especially appealed to the Japanese character, the grenades bursting in different directions like a shower of rockets. Very many of these wooden mortars were constructed and placed in the trenches, but they were hardly ever actually carried forward during an assault.

During the siege of Port Arthur the Japanese soldiers were called upon to face death in so many different ways that each soldier could make choice of what he considered to be the most honourable method, and succumb accordingly. There were bullets—hardly noticed, and treated with contempt. There were common shells, shrapnel, and pom-poms. There were mines, hand-grenades, and torpedoes; pits filled with fire, and with stakes pointed at the end; masses of

rock, and poisonous gases. In addition to these known methods of destruction there was one which spread terror in the ranks of the soldiers, and which caused even the bravest to hesitate. This was the unknown death. It was responsible for a superstitious fear which remained in the army for many months. It was rumoured that, during the early attacks in August, an entire line of infantry assaulting one of the positions had fallen side by side in death; yet no injury could be found afterwards on their bodies. The Staff explained the phenomenon by stating that it was due to a live electric wire which the Russians had stretched across the front of their positions, and which caused instant death to any one who touched it. For a long time many were inclined to doubt the existence of the wire, and believed that it dwelt only in the imagination of the soldiers. On my way home to England I travelled on the same ship with a Russian naval lieutenant, who was Prince Umtomsky's chief Staff officer on the *Peresviet*. We often talked over the siege, and one day he inquired of me if any Japanese had ever been killed by the electric wire. I repeated to him the tradition attaching to its use. He then told me in detail all the facts connected with it, he himself having been the chief electrician in the fortress, and having obtained permission to make the experiment. The wire was placed among the ordinary wire entanglements, so that it could not be discovered. The current was sufficiently strong to destroy any one touching it. The lieutenant was never certain if it was successful, but eye-witnesses had told him they had seen a whole line of Japanese soldiers go down, in one of the early attacks, by coming in contact with the wire. Naturally its utility was short-lived, because

the wire was speedily destroyed by shell-fire or cut with the entanglements.

Another of the most difficult problems which confronted the Japanese in the early stages of the siege was cutting the wire entanglements placed by the Russians at the foot of all their positions. The wire was made of steel, and about one-eighth of an inch in diameter. It was never barbed, and never placed in single rows, but stuck on uprights firmly embedded in the ground. The importance of getting rid of this obstacle before assaulting positions such as had to be attacked at Port Arthur can be readily understood. Success depended on the dash and speed of the infantry, and if they were checked half-way up the slopes by wire obstacles the attack was certain to prove a costly failure. The ordinary hand-wire nippers supplied to the infantry were found wanting in the same way as the nippers supplied during the South African War. They might cut the wire eventually, but it was not possible to sever the strands at one grip, which was essential under the heavy fire brought to bear on the volunteers. Long cutters, on which a good leverage could be put, were sent up to the troops, and with these better results were obtained. Nearly all the wire was cut by night by volunteers who crept out for that purpose. Another effective method of dealing with the wire entanglements was to set fire to the wooden uprights and let them collapse, bringing the wire to the ground. At one time the sappers resorted to the desperate experiment of lying down beneath the wires and pretending they were killed. When the Russians were off their guard the sappers would proceed to cut the strands. In nearly every case it meant certain death, and yet

men could always be found ready to volunteer for the task. The discovery of this method led to much indiscriminate picking off of all wounded men lying in close proximity to the wire by the Russian marksmen. I have frequently seen the Russians, notably on October 30, start up in their trenches and deliberately shoot any man who stirred. Although cruel this was legitimate, because they could not afford to run the risk of having men feigning death while actually engaged in cutting the wire. The innocent, therefore, suffered for the guilty.

The soldiers remained on duty in the advanced trenches for twenty-four hours at a stretch, and were then moved back behind the lines to one of the vacated camps while another regiment took their place. In this manner the men were able to obtain some repose, and have an opportunity of cooking hot food, washing, and mending their clothes. On October 14 Lieutenant Hori conducted Mr Gerald Morgan and myself right round all the trenches occupied by the soldiers of the 9th Division, and imparted to us the interesting information that on the morrow an assault would be made on the work of Hachimachayama, and also on the Russian trench running round the foot of Nirusan. It was necessary to take the former before any advance could be made up the slopes of Nirusan to attack the fort on the summit, because any troops attempting to scale Nirusan, with Hachimachayama still in the hands of the enemy, would be exposed to an enfilading fire. It was therefore with additional interest that I watched the behaviour of the Japanese soldiers in the trenches immediately facing Hachimachayama and the foot of Nirusan, for on the afternoon of the following day they would be called upon to advance against those

two positions. An attack against one of the Port Arthur forts meant sending the first attacking party practically to certain destruction; so here were many hundreds of men under what was equivalent to a sentence of death.

It is always an interesting study to watch men pass the last hours of their lives, and many opportunities for doing this were afforded in the early weeks of October, just before the great series of assaults which were to end so disastrously to the Japanese arms. How does a Japanese soldier behave on such occasions? Is he worried, or anxious, or nervous? As far as I could see, although many knew they had only twenty-four more hours to pass on this earth, and no prospect of ever again seeing their beloved native land, it did not in the least depress their spirits or make any alteration in their normal mode of life. The men were sitting round as usual, talking amongst themselves, laughing, and doubtless discussing their prospects of success on the following day. Some were cleaning their rifles, sharpening their bayonets, and a few writing farewell letters; but the majority were asleep, or smoking their cigarettes, or sucking their sweets, as if nothing out of the ordinary was in immediate prospect. As soon as they had finished their cigarettes and their sweets, they would lie down and go to sleep; then get up and await the sound of the telephone bell, which was to be the signal of death to so many. When the bell rang, they would climb over the trenches, or pass through the intervals between the sandbags, and dash forward to the attack. After a few yards a bullet would stop them short; and other men, built on the same lines, would take their place in the ranks. Can we be surprised that the Jap-

anese soldier was so invincible throughout the late struggle?

The regiments which were to take part in an assault were always informed of the exact hour at which it would be delivered, on the preceding evening, when the divisional orders were issued. This gave the regimental officers all necessary time to make their preparations, and the men did not have the anticipation of the coming struggle on their minds longer than was absolutely necessary. The attack on Hachimachayama was fixed for the afternoon of October 15. The 18th Brigade of the 9th Division were to deliver the assault, and were to be assisted by most of the guns round the fortress. This was the first test of the new tactics, for hitherto it had been the infantry that had done all the work. Time and time again the same men had been launched against entrenchments, hills, and forts, and on every occasion they had advanced with the same courage and determination, backed by no adequate artillery-fire. The Japanese soldier had seen the bodies of his comrades left on hills that could not be retained after they were captured; he had seen his wounded friends left unattended and exposed to the blaze of a summer's sun between his own and the enemy's lines. Every soldier knew when he went into action that if he fell in front of the enemy's lines, even slightly wounded, he would probably be condemned to die a slow and lingering death from thirst and starvation, or the gradual effects of his undressed wound. The Red Cross was never respected, and no effort was made to obtain armistices for collecting the wounded and burying the dead,—so bitter had become the feelings between besiegers and besieged. The reason for this state of affairs was to be found in the long and

determined nature of the struggle, in unavoidable misunderstandings, and in the fear that any concession to the suffering might lead to the exposure or capture of important positions in the chain of defence. Blame no one, for no one was to blame: it was the struggle, not the soldiers, which was responsible; and these men, unless they had felt that vindictive feeling towards one another, would not have possessed those other heroic instincts which rendered the siege so Trojan in its incidents. Take the case of the Japanese. For three months they had been engaged in attacking permanent fortifications, without material help from artillery-fire, the place of which had been supplied by their bravery and self-sacrifice. Thousands of their comrades lay buried in and around the Russian positions, and thousands more lay in the hospitals at Dalny and in Japan. Yet little progress had been made, to show against all this loss. The forts were still untaken, and fifty or a hundred yards from the trench in which the soldiers lived were the men who had sent their comrades to an untimely grave, still defiant and unconquered. There must always come a time in a great struggle, such as took place before Port Arthur, when Geneva Conventions are thrown to the winds, and the real feelings which animate brave men, when brought face to face with the realities of war, lie exposed to the full view of shocked humanity.

CHAPTER XIV.

CAPTURE OF HACHIMACHAYAMA.

On the afternoon of October 15 the infantry who were called upon to assault Hachimachayama and the trench at the foot of Nirusan had nothing to complain of in the way of artillery support; for we saw for the first time the great howitzers in action against fortifications consisting of earthworks, sandbags, and bomb-proofs. The bombardment began at 2 P.M., and was kept up without intermission until 4.30 P.M. Not only were the howitzers in action, but also the naval guns and field-artillery, the latter firing shrapnel over the positions in the last half-hour of the bombardment. This was the first occasion that such powerful ordnance had been employed on land, and the effect on the trenches was instantaneous. Whenever one of these big shells struck, it sent up an enormous column of black smoke, from out of which would fly in all directions fragments and segments of the shell, large rocks, broken pieces of timber, sandbags, and refuse of every kind; and when the smoke had cleared a heap of rubbish marked the spot where there had formerly been a trench. It did not seem possible that any infantry could remain in position under such a cannonade.

After the bombardment had lasted for some two hours, Colonel Nomizo sent one battalion of the newly recruited 7th Regiment, which by August 23, after only one month of war, had been reduced from a strength of 2700 to a total of 208, up the hill with fixed bayonets at a slow walk. They climbed the hill almost without losing a man — for the Russians had been unable to stand this new epoch in shell-fire, and had abandoned the position. Just as they reached the earthwork, one of the 28-centimetre guns fired a last round, which, bursting in front, knocked over several of the infantry. Thus a brilliant success was gained with the loss of half a dozen men. It had been decided, before the attack began, that it would be impossible to remain in the Russian work on the summit of the hill after it was taken, on account of the fire from the commanding positions immediately behind it. It was the object of the assaulting party therefore to destroy as far as possible the interior of the work and then to evacuate it, remaining on the dead ground beneath the crest of the hill until the engineers had had time to construct shelters under the cover of darkness. The whole affair was admirably carried out and perfectly successful. Oil was carried up the hill and poured over the woodwork, which was then set alight and partly consumed. Immediately the successful occupation of Hachimachayama was seen to have been accomplished, the Japanese soldiers in the parallel at the foot of Nirusan jumped over the sandbags and charged the Russian line, forty metres away. Six or seven were immediately shot, but the remainder reached the trench almost before the defenders realised the Japanese were upon them. The Russians then stood up and

made a show of resistance with the bayonet, shooting the leading Japanese, pushing their rifles right up against them. Then, before there was time to realise what had happened, the Japanese were over the trench, and the Russians were out at the back bolting for cover. But there was no cover for them to make for.

In their front was the high, steep hill on which Nirusan was constructed, and over which the Japanese were already bursting innumerable shells; to their right was captured Hachimachayama; behind them were the Japanese. The only avenue of retreat open to these unfortunate men was towards the west, where, after a run of some four hundred yards, a dip in the ground would provide some cover. The moment the Japanese climbed over the sandbags, some forty or fifty Russians, a force totally inadequate to hold the trench, bolted out at the back. Imagine the experiences of these wretched men during the afternoon. For two hours they had been subjected to a bombardment which can only be described as terrible, from the big howitzers and from hundreds of other guns; and although they may have found some shelter from this iron storm, still their losses from shell-fire were heavy. They knew well that such a bombardment could only be the precursor of an assault from the enemy's trench, not forty yards away, and their numbers were utterly insufficient to resist a determined attack from the 19th Regiment, even if warned in time of the advance of the Japanese infantry. They knew also that the only line of retreat open to them was across the exposed side of the hill, on which there was not a particle of cover. Thus these unhappy men for two hours waited for certain death.

Better for them had they remained at their post fighting to the last, and been shot or bayonetted; but the desire to live is strong, and no doubt these simple Siberian peasants, in the garb of warriors, forgot, in their overmastering desire to escape from the dread unknown, the terrible situation in which they were placed. The scene that followed can only be described as a battue, — surely a more miserable spectacle was never witnessed. A rabbit will run the length of a line of guns, being often missed before it is bagged. In its panic-stricken endeavours to escape it will run from cover to cover, and jump and wriggle from side to side, but all to no purpose. This is exactly what happened at the foot of Nirusan; only to add to the interest we had human rabbits running along a line of magazine rifles, jumping from side to side, describing strange angles and circles, in their frantic endeavours to avoid the marksmen eagerly lining the side of the trench they had just vacated.

When they first left cover, the majority of the Russians made straight up the steep slope of Nirusan; but they had only gone a short distance when they realised that to climb Nirusan was an utter impossibility, so some changed direction and made for the west. The greater number, however, became so absolutely panic-stricken that they commenced to run round in circles, with only one desire, to avoid as long as possible the fatal bullet. It is really extraordinary how many bullets it takes to kill a single man; and although every one was hoping to see their sufferings put an end to as soon as possible, it nevertheless seemed ages before it was accomplished. A Russian would first run up the hill, then to the east, then towards the Japanese; he would then retrace his steps,

the bullets throwing up little clouds of dust all around him, but still he would continue to run. All of a sudden he would fall, or rather collapse, in a heap; and if he moved again another bullet would speedily finish him off, his body remaining a black spot on the hillside.

One man went on running round in circles until he became tired; then, evidently thinking the game not worth the candle, and that he might just as well die in breath as out of it, sat down and waited for the end. This was not long in coming. Those who started immediately for the west stood the best chance of making their escape, but only a very few succeeded; the single bullet might miss its mark, but the artillery took out their shot-gun and made a successful bag of nearly all, with shrapnel. A Russian would run along as quickly as possible; but the soldiers were encumbered, as they have been for centuries, by their high boots and greatcoats. What a wonderful sacrifice to generations of iron discipline, that these were not abandoned in their flight! They appeared also to be weak from want of proper food; and so the pace, considering the unusual circumstances, seemed very slow. Presently a small cloud of white smoke would appear above the head of the runner, and immediately the ground would burst up into hundreds of little spurts of earth. As for the victim, he would be carried on some little distance by his own momentum, and then apparently his legs would cease to work and he would fall forward, sprawling on his face, his arms stretched out, his rifle flying from him, and cease to be a soldier of the Czar. It mattered little to him that his emperor had decreed, by a strange irony, that every month in the siege of Port

Arthur should count as a full year's service—this man's career had lasted just two hours too long. The last man to leave the shelter of the trench had been an officer, and although he was wounded in the right leg and could only limp along, he nevertheless managed to make good his escape. I believe the Japanese infantry, who always have the greatest respect for courage in an opponent, refrained from shooting at him.

All these incidents were plainly visible to the Russians in their forts; and it can be well imagined how it must have stung them to madness to see their comrades shot down like so many rabbits, and with what bitter feelings they must have regarded the perpetrators of this legitimate battue. Although the Russians were at this time very short of shrapnel, so indignant were they with the Japanese gunners when the artillery opened up on their retreating comrades, that they replied to this fire by opening up with shrapnel themselves. After seeing a few incidents of this sort, it is easy to understand the hatred which such a bitter and stubborn struggle must inspire. We were face to face with war shorn of all its humanitarian accoutrements, and when they are gone, what remains? Nothing but the real issue, shamelessly raising its head thousands of miles from civilisation,—which side can kill quickest and at least expense?

According to their invariable custom, the Russians made a determined sortie on Hachimachayama that night from New Banrhusan; but this was, as usual, successfully repulsed. During the assault the Japanese losses were practically nil; but this sortie cost them some 200 men.

On our way back to camp, after viewing the capture

of Hachimachayama from the advanced trenches, Mr Morgan and myself had an interesting rencontre. In one of the trenches facing the position General Oshima had taken up his stand, and we had to pass this point on our way home. It is a golden rule never to approach a general during an engagement: they are apt to resent the intrusion of strangers, especially if things have not gone well. We had no idea that General Oshima would have chosen such an advanced observation-post, and it was therefore with some trepidation that we approached the spot. Luckily the day had been eminently successful: two positions had been captured at very little cost. As we came up Colonel Nomizo, of the 7th Regiment, was explaining to Oshima the manner in which his battalions had taken the hill, and finished his account just as we passed. We endeavoured to walk by unobserved, but the general was himself the first to notice us. He beckoned us to take our place by his side, and calling Lieutenant Hori, his A.D.C., who spoke English perfectly, he made us relate exactly what we had seen. He was especially delighted with the account of the manner in which the Russians had been driven out of their trench at the foot of Nirusan. Nomizo himself, always a charming man to meet, next proceeded to relate how his regiment had taken Hachimachayama. When this narrative was finished we got up to leave, but Oshima asked us to wait: why we did not know, but we soon found out. An orderly came running through the trenches from the direction of Oshima's headquarters, carrying a bottle of whisky and some cakes. The general filled our glasses, Nomizo's, his own, and those of the other officers, and we drank to the health of the Japanese army and to the speedy fall

of the fortress. Had any of these officers been asked, they would all have said that the fall of Nirusan and Shojusan was only a matter of a few days, so confident were they of success. Little did they realise the appalling slaughter and months of hard work which were to ensue before even a foothold was obtained on any of the permanent forts.

The capture of Hachimachayama and the lower Russian trench line at the foot of Nirusan enabled the Japanese to sap up the hill on which Nirusan was constructed towards the upper Russian trench line. A glance at the plan will make clear the character of the construction of Nirusan. As an advanced line of defence to the ditch and caponiere galleries, the Russians had planted a trench on the edge of the ditch, and it was necessary to drive them out of this before any attempt could be made against the caponiere galleries and escarpment of the fort. The Japanese were really at sea as to the construction of the Russian works. They had no conception, when they announced their intention of making a general assault on October 30, that there were any caponiere galleries to bar their way to the ditch at Fort Nirusan. It was their hope and intention to fill in the ditch with rubbish and corn-stalks as soon as they had captured the trench line protecting it. They were so misled that they considered it quite possible to fill in the ditch between the date of the capture of the upper trench-line on October 26 and the day fixed for the great assault on October 30. With the same ignorance and misplaced optimism the Japanese hoped also to assault Shojusan on October 30. Ever since the capture of the Suishien lunettes, to the south of the village of that name, on September 21, the 3rd Regiment had been busily engaged in sapping

towards Shojusan, and by October 25 their saps were half-way up the lower spurs of that hill. Here again the Japanese had not taken into consideration the possible existence of caponiere galleries, and imagined they would have free access to the ditch immediately they captured the upper Russian trench line at its edge. How these hopes were doomed to failure I shall relate later.

On October 25 it was announced from headquarters that on the following day a general bombardment along the whole line would commence at 9 A.M., and would be continued up to the morning of the 30th, when an assault would be made against all those works which had been sapped up to during the previous two months. As a preliminary measure, in order to allow the escarpments of Forts Nirusan and Shojusan to be assaulted on the 30th, an attack was to be made on the afternoon of October 26 on the upper Russian trench lines protecting the ditches of these two forts. On the morning of October 26 the bombardment opened at a slow rate and lasted until the afternoon, when a very heavy fire was concentrated on the upper trench lines on Nirusan and Shojusan to pave the way for the infantry attack. The advance, as had become quite customary, was timed to take place at five o'clock in the afternoon, one hour before sunset. This would allow the infantry to take the position, and leave no daylight for driving them out by shell-fire.

The assault on Nirusan was almost an exact repetition of the advance on Hachimachayama ten days before, for again the Russians were forced to evacuate their positions under the concentrated fire of the Japanese artillery. The infantry advanced in fine style: their losses were not heavy, and such casualties

as they sustained were due to the shell-fire concentrated on the slope of the hill by the western forts.

The advance on Shojusan was equally successful, but the casualties were greater, because the Japanese advance was enfiladed by a dreadful fire from the western forts, from which there was no cover. When the Russians were driven out of their upper trench line the Japanese immediately proceeded to connect the heads of their saps to the captured trench. This work was carried out in the most gallant manner by the men of the working-parties, many of whom were killed or wounded by the heavy shell-fire brought to bear on them.

General Stoessel evidently felt the loss of the screen of Nirusan severely, for during the night of the 26th the most determined sortie of the siege was made by the Russians to recapture the position. For several hours a fierce combat was kept up on the edge of the ditch, which ended in the Russians being forced to retire to their caponiere galleries, leaving 80 dead. The loss of the Japanese was over 300 men killed and wounded.

During the assault on Nirusan Mr Morgan and I had a somewhat novel and interesting experience. We were anxious to obtain some photographs of the Japanese infantry as they advanced up the slope of Nirusan. Attached to the army headquarters were a corps of photographers, under the command of an infantry captain seconded from one of the line battalions, and trained for that purpose. He kindly consented to allow us to accompany him to the trench line at the foot of Nirusan, where he intended to work his camera. The camera used by the Japanese army is of very large size, 16 in. by 12 in., and had to be set

up on a stand. Plates were exclusively used in it. The captain was accompanied by a photographer, who owned a shop in Yokohama, and by several civilian orderlies who carried his outfit. We made our way down to the advanced trenches some time before the commencement of the engagement, and finally came to a halt in a deserted sap at the foot of Nirusan, about 200 yards from the enemy's position. When the bombardment commenced, and clouds of smoke obscured everything from view, the orderlies began operations by taking out one of the sandbags near the top and leaving a space into which the camera was inserted. The camera was painted the colour of the sandbags so as not to show up, and in the smoke and confusion it was almost certain to escape the enemy's observation. The only danger was from stray bullets, which might damage the lens. I tried the same experiment with my camera, but was promptly stopped by the captain because it was painted black and would have shown up against the sandbags. When the infantry commenced to advance up the hill several exposures were made of them, with excellent results. Frequently placing the camera in position would attract the attention of the Russian marksmen, and they would concentrate a tremendous fire on the spot, necessitating a speedy removal elsewhere. On this occasion we met with such an experience, and the officer attributed it to the presence of my friend and myself. We therefore left him, and moved on to find a suitable position from which to view the attack. The most favourable distance at which to watch fighting is about 500 or 600 yards, behind the cover of a substantial trench. With powerful glasses at the distance every figure comes out life-size. I have seen attacks

at closer ranges, but the result is always disappointing, because it is utterly impossible to keep your head above cover at so short a range, even if your body is well protected. After leaving the photography corps, my companion and myself found what we considered to be an ideal spot, about 200 yards away from the Russian lines. At the top of the trench were little loopholes, which promised an excellent view. It was a perfect position as long as the bombardment lasted, but immediately the infantry went forward it became untenable. The Russian marksmen on the neighbouring hills commenced to shoot at the trenches, as they could not very well see the infantry who were advancing up the slope of Nirusan.

We were in the company of about a dozen Japanese cavalry orderlies, who were enjoying a half-holiday, and had also chosen this vantage-point from which to watch events. When the firing was at its height we could not keep our heads above the trench, and were obliged to lie huddled in the bottom without seeing anything. As long as we remained prone we were safe from rifle-fire: not so with the shrapnel, which the Russians suddenly opened up, aiming at a battery of mountain-guns among some trees a short distance behind. The Japanese cavalry orderlies were getting more than they bargained for, and a man who had made himself their leader beckoned to his party to follow him, at the same time plucking my friend and myself by the sleeve. He then doubled himself up, ran down the trench for about 100 yards, and disappeared down a hole at the side of it. He was followed by us all, the last half-dozen in a state bordering on panic, because to hasten our movements another shell burst just overhead. Having passed through the hole, we found ourselves

in a spacious room dug out of the ground, with walls covered over with mats and blankets. There we remained for at least an hour, seeing nothing of the fight, and not having the least desire to do so. If the firing ceased for a minute one of the party would venture forth and two or three others would follow him, but they invariably came back through the hole, tumbling over one another in their frantic endeavours to escape the shrapnel. A large shell landed fair and square on one corner of this dwelling and knocked it away, leaving a window through which daylight made its appearance. It was curious to see these men tumbling over one another in order to be the first under cover, and yet if they had been on duty they would have advanced under a fire ten times as severe without turning a hair. Such is the wonderful effect of discipline. Later in the afternoon the Japanese made tea. When things had calmed down we ventured forth, and made our way back through the parallels to the headquarters of the 9th Division.

A curious incident occurred *en route*, which showed how the nerves of even the Japanese soldiers sometimes broke down under the tremendous strain put on them. We had hardly left our friends in the hole when, turning the corner of one of the saps, we came face to face with a party of stretcher-bearers making their way down to the foot of Nirusan to collect the wounded. A corporal was walking ahead of the men; when he caught sight of us he turned and fled backwards; the panic communicated itself to the leading soldiers, who dropped their stretchers and followed their corporal. One young soldier finally stopped, and taking a good look at us, saw we were alone and unarmed. He then called to the corporal, who

came up with the remainder of the men, looking somewhat crestfallen. These unfortunate soldiers had been engaged in so many desperate enterprises that they were ready to take alarm at anything. Making their way to the front, and suddenly coming upon two strangers who resembled the enemy, they had at once come to the conclusion we were leading a successful sortie.

Another incident of a similar character occurred to me later on in November, after the arrival of the 7th Division. I was riding down to the headquarters of the 11th Division when, on turning a corner, I espied the drummers of the 7th Division sitting by the roadside. These men had not previously encountered the Europeans attached to the army, and were not aware of their presence at the front. I was wearing a fur coat and cap owing to the extreme cold, and when these men saw me riding down upon them waving a stick, they at once concluded I was the leader of a sotnia of the dreaded Cossacks. Their only weapon, as bandsmen, was a short bronze sword, and therefore they did not wait for my onslaught, but fled over the hillside, leaving their instruments by the road. I never saw them again.

Of all the dangers encountered during the siege the one most dreaded was that of being accidentally shot by a Japanese soldier mistaking you for a Russian, and I experienced many unpleasant moments when passing sentries, especially during the night. I could not speak a word of Japanese, and there was always the likelihood of being held up or shot at. The authorities were fully aware of this fact, and that

was one of their main reasons for objecting to the presence of correspondents at the front. As months passed the majority of the soldiers came to know you by sight; but if a new division or brigade arrived on the scene, it always took some time before the men became reconciled to your appearance in their midst. From what I saw of the Japanese they would be an easy army to surprise, because the sentries will never fire until they are absolutely sure that they have an enemy in front of them. Riding about the country alone at night, I have dozens of times come right on a sentry who has challenged me. I have replied to the best of my ability, and they always allowed me to approach right up to them without showing the least sign of alarm. I look upon the Japanese as, in many ways, the most humane race that exists; and I believe the forbearance on the part of the sentries was due largely to their individual kindness of disposition, which caused them to take every precaution against making a mistake before attempting to defend themselves.

On the morning of October 27 all the preliminary positions were in the hands of the Japanese, and the whole army looked forward with confidence to the 30th; for since the advent of the big howitzers two important positions had been taken with very little trouble or loss, and it began to seem as if, after all, the Russians would be driven out of their forts by shell-fire, with a determined assault following close on its heels. Among the spoils of Nirusan were two machine-guns, and one of the most powerful of the search-lights which caused the Japanese so much trouble during the earlier operations, when their rays could be brought to bear on every

movement in the Suishien valley. For some time past, however, the search-lights had lost their terrors; for, although they were used every night, they could not be deflected sufficiently to expose the working-parties in the advanced parallels, and were said to assist rather than hamper the work.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ASSAULT OF OCTOBER 30TH.

The entire Japanese army looked forward with keen excitement to the approaching assault, for every soldier had become tired of the monotony of nights and days spent in the trenches, with the never-ceasing skirmishing and artillery-fire. The soldiers were anxious to prove what they could do, once the big guns had paved the way for them. The successful occupation of Hachimachayama and of the Russian trench lines on Nirusan and Shojusan with comparatively little loss, seemed to point the way to a further successful attack on the main line of forts. The last of the outlying positions was in the hands of the Japanese, and they were face to face with the forts themselves: with the assistance of the big guns the army regarded success as already assured. The programme of the operations was announced beforehand in a manner denoting supreme confidence. The artillery would bombard the forts for three days; then, some time on the 30th, the great assault would be delivered. It was also announced that the three days intervening between the capture of the screen of Nirusan and the day fixed for the great assault, on October 30, would be employed in filling up the great ditches at the

foot of the escarpments of Nirusan and Shojusan. It was thought that this would give sufficient time to make a causeway over these ditches, on which the infantry could advance on the 30th; but this calculation, which was based on the report of a spy, turned out to be entirely erroneous, and when the engineers commenced to measure the height and width of the ditches, they were found to be far greater than had been anticipated.

On Nirusan, the discovery of this mistake did not at first upset the prearranged plan of operations: the work of filling in the ditch was continued, but no progress was made in any way commensurate with the amount of earth and corn-stalks thrown into it. For some time this fact baffled the Japanese engineers, but an investigation led to the discovery that as fast as the corn-stalks were thrown into the ditch they were drawn into the fort through tunnels, the existence of which had not been previously suspected by the Japanese. Then the Japanese discovered for the first time the existence of the caponiere galleries protecting the ditch, which were connected to the interior of Nirusan by these tunnels. It was therefore decided to abandon any attempt to fill in the ditch, which was forty-five feet deep and thirty broad, and instead to mine underneath it, and then endeavour to blow the caponiere galleries into the ditch, thus making a heap of rubbish over which the infantry might attack. Similar obstacles barred the way to an assault on Shojusan; and as these two works were considered to be interdependent, it was decided to abandon any attempt to assault either of them on the 30th. It is difficult to understand why the whole attack was not abandoned or postponed, when it was discovered

that Nirusan and Shojusan were for the time being impregnable.

These two forts were the strongest along the eastern section of the line. If some of the Keikwansan group of forts could be captured it would still be doubtful if they could be retained, on account of the shell-fire from behind, and it was at the same time absolutely certain that their capture would not bring about the fall of Nirusan and Shojusan. It may have been thought that if a footing could be obtained on some of the Keikwansan group, the Russians would be cut off from reinforcing or provisioning Nirusan and Shojusan, and that these two positions, thus isolated, would speedily have to capitulate. To assault the Keikwansan forts was a mere leap in the dark, or at most an experiment to find out what effect the fire of the big guns had had on the fortifications. It could not possibly bring about any decisive result. Once the plan had been decided upon the Staff were loth to abandon it, even though they knew that half the original scheme could not even be attempted.

When the approaching assault was announced on October 25, it was easy to see what was meant by choosing that particular date for the recommencement of active operations. It was confidently expected that the bombardment for five days of the Russian positions would pave the way sufficiently for a successful infantry attack on the 30th. It was hoped that on the 30th the outer chain of fortifications would be taken; and that would leave four clear days before the Emperor's birthday on November 3, for any further assaults on positions which were known to exist behind the main line of defence. Hardly anything was known of the fortifications of Port Arthur: the absence

of all real knowledge of the defences was one of the most astonishing features of the siege. I am not prepared to say if the Staff expected to take the second line of defences by November 3, except in the event of the Russians becoming demoralised or losing so many men on the 30th that further resistance would be out of the question. There cannot be a shadow of doubt that it was expected the outer chain of forts would be captured by November 3, and that this would be the birthday present of the army to their Emperor, even though the greatest gift of all had to be postponed to a later date.

For weeks the army had been anxiously awaiting the order for a general attack; rumours of it had filled the air, and the date had been accurately fixed by the majority as likely to be somewhere towards the end of October. The significance of the approaching anniversary had not been lost on the soldiers: they wished to show the world what they could accomplish by their bravery and determination when the right moment arrived, in spite of the series of heartbreaking reverses they had encountered up to that time. What could be better fitted to arouse their enthusiasm to the highest pitch—so essential in a desperate enterprise—than the name-day of their Emperor, who had been waiting so long, and watching with such interest, for the success of their arms. These were potent considerations for the commander-in-chief; and if it was really considered possible to take the forts by assault, then no more favourable opportunity could have been chosen for the attempt.

The troops spent the days preceding the assault in preparations of a varied character. One regiment erected a temple or shrine, under the shelter of a

ridge, made of tent-poles, red blankets, and numerous flags; the priests officiated in their gaudy robes, while the soldiers prayed for victory and for the repose of the spirits of those who might fall in battle. On the altar various delicacies purchased from the canteens were displayed, and in the evening when I again passed the same spot the service was over, some of the soldiers were collecting the blankets for their more prosaic use, while others were eating the offerings, and drinking the saki which on that day had been specially served out. All were in the highest spirits, and many were singing, anticipating with evident joy the coming struggle.

Up to the evening of October 26 everything was favourable to the attack. The capture of Hachimachayama and of the screen of Nirusan seemed to point to further success, so destructive had been the fire of the 28-centimetre guns when concentrated on the trenches. After the discovery was made that the ditches of Nirusan and Shojusan could not possibly be filled in by the 30th, and that it would be necessary to resort to mining if these forts were to be taken, the favourable aspect of affairs changed. Half the plan of operations collapsed like a pack of cards; then the knotty question arose, whether the assault on the Keikwansan forts should be proceeded with. That question must have agitated for a considerable time the minds of those responsible; but, however that may be, the project was adhered to.

It fell to the lot of the 11th Division, commanded by General Tsuchiya, to deliver the attack on these forts, and there seems little doubt that Tsuchiya expressed his confidence to General Nogi of taking the positions. He probably pointed out that his troops

had for a long time past been anticipating the attack, that they were now worked up to the highest point of enthusiasm, and that they were eager to atone for past failures by obtaining a decisive success on the Emperor's birthday. The effect of another postponement could only be injurious: the ardour of the troops would be damped by a further period of waiting in their parallels gazing at the forts, which would daily become more formidable to their imagination.

Looking at the forts themselves, no one could fail to be struck by their immense natural and artificial strength, probably as great as any troops have ever been called upon to face: if an attack was to be pressed home successfully, it could only be based on a calculation of the number of the assailants compared with the killing capacity of the defenders. All other plans would depend solely on fortune, which might or might not be favourable, and on idle conjecture as to the effect of modern siege-guns on permanent fortifications.

Before describing the assault made on the eastern section of the fortifications, it is necessary to understand exactly the point to which the engineering operations had been brought on the positions chosen for attack. The Japanese were close up to the foot of Higashi Keikwansan, where they had their advanced parallel; but they had made no effort to sap up the hill towards the Russian trench line half-way across. The parallels of the 11th Division were also well advanced to the foot of Q Work. All through September and the beginning of October the sappers had been engaged in sapping towards the North Keikwansan Fort: when they had advanced above

ground as far as possible, they were obliged to tunnel down towards the caponiere chambers guarding the ditch of the fort. The Russians immediately commenced to countermine against the Japanese, and on October 23 they exploded an ordinary torpedo, taken from one of their warships, under the besiegers' tunnel, which was within a dozen feet of the caponiere chamber at the north-west angle of the ditch. Some twenty-eight Japanese soldiers were killed or wounded, and much damage was inflicted on their works; but the explosion in reality simplified the task of the engineers immeasurably, for it knocked a small hole in the roof of the caponiere chamber.

There were two big caponiere chambers at the north-east and north-west corners of the ditch, and they were connected by a gallery to one another; but the gallery was divided up into small partitions to enable different portions of it to be defended separately. On the east face of the ditch there was one long gallery, with windows looking on to the moat. All three sides of the ditch could therefore be swept by a cross fire from the caponiere chambers. Once they had gained the hole in the caponiere chamber at the north-east angle of the ditch, the next problem which confronted the Japanese was to drive the Russians out of it. This was easily accomplished by the simple expedient of firing a machine gun and throwing hand-grenades into the interior, until the Russians were forced to evacuate it. Then the sappers were called on to enter the chamber themselves,—a far more difficult task, because the Russians, having retired to the gallery, could pick off any one who endeavoured to pass through the hole in the roof. The Japanese flung sand-bags down into

the interior until they succeeded in blocking up the entrance to the gallery; then the sappers dropped down from the top and obtained possession of the whole chamber. That was the position of affairs on October 30, the day fixed for the general assault. It will be seen that as the Russians still held the caponiere chamber at the north-east angle of the ditch, and also the gallery connecting it with the chamber occupied by the Japanese, so there was very little chance of an assault on the escarpment meeting with any success on October 30.

Throughout the 27th, 28th, and 29th the bombardment had been kept up incessantly, but only at a slow rate. It was feared that the ammunition for the big howitzers would give out before the morning of the 30th, if any rapid fire were indulged in; and so the firing, although continuous, was by no means vigorous. The supply of ammunition was a very serious consideration, especially for the 11-inch guns; and although thousands and thousands of rounds had been brought up by rail from Dalny during the previous month, the gunners were obliged to husband their ammunition for the three hours' concentrated bombardment which was to immediately precede the assault. During the 27th, 28th, and 29th the Russian guns had replied shot for shot to the fire of the more favourably placed Japanese guns, but inflicted little damage: on the other hand, as it seemed impossible for the Japanese to silence the Russian artillery, it may be presumed that the latter also suffered comparatively little loss. It was difficult to see what effect the big shells were having on the fortifications, although the trenches and earthworks were in many places destroyed, and the Chinese Wall

began to show many holes and less symmetry of form. Everyone had become so accustomed to see large quantities of earth, stones, and wood-work displaced, and no real result obtained, that any success claimed by the gunners was taken with a grain of salt. If you want to accurately gauge the effect of artillery-fire on positions about to be assaulted, never go to the gunner: he will invariably tell you the same hackneyed story, that the forts are entirely destroyed, and the defenders either slain or in full retreat. The right person to go to is the infantryman in the advanced trenches, whose lot it will be to put the optimism of the gunner to the severe test of practical experiment, when the moment comes for him to leave cover and charge the enemy's line: I have never found that same confidence in modern artillery-fire in the advanced trenches as on the hills behind.

It was evident that the fire of the big howitzers, which were carefully placed behind steep hills and were absolutely safe from direct fire, was galling to the Russians. The latter, finding it quite impossible to get at any of these guns, adopted the exceptional course of opening on them with shrapnel, a commodity they were reported to be short of, and which would be far more valuable during the assault. This, however, entirely failed to silence, or even to inconvenience, the Japanese gunners.

I could not find out on October 29 what time exactly the assault would take place on the following day, and when the artillery commenced to bombard more furiously than ever during the night of October 29, it almost seemed as if the hour of dawn, so frequently chosen for assaults, would also see this attack made.

But to fight at dawn is not a Japanese characteristic; they prefer the daylight, and like to take things comfortably—for, in spite of his great powers of endurance, a Japanese probably looks more after himself in the field, and thinks more of his personal comforts, than any other soldier. The firing throughout the night of the 29th was something to be remembered: the big howitzers were fired in salvos, four at a time in one battery, and the force of the combined explosion was so great that it shook the houses and blew in the windows in the Chinese villages. The morning of the 30th dawned, and there was no assault. It was soon afterwards announced that the final bombardment would commence at 9 A.M., and would be continued until one o'clock, when, if all went well, the infantry would advance. The firing during the night was merely a forewarning of the greater things that were still to come.

The bombardment which opened at 9 A.M. on the morning of October 30 was probably the severest ever seen on land,—not by reason of the actual number of the guns engaged, which no doubt was largely exceeded in the great struggles in the north, but on account of the character of the ordnance employed. Naturally the 11-inch howitzers claimed the chief honours; but all the other guns, both naval and siege, played their part, while during the last half hour the field-artillery also opened up with shrapnel on the trenches. No one who listened to the roar of the guns and to the screeching of the hundreds of shells which filled the air is ever likely to forget the effect. Nirusan and Shojusan were freely bombarded, but, with that exception, the entire fire of all the guns was concentrated on the Keikwansan group. What

made it still more attractive from a spectacular point of view was the fact that you could follow the course of every one of the 11-inch shells from the moment it left the muzzle of the gun to a point when it arrived within about a yard of the objective. As it left the muzzle of the howitzer, the shell resembled a Rugby football kicked by a New Zealander; then it gradually faded into distance, until the eye rested on nothing but a mere speck. Then, just as the objective was reached, this speck would also disappear from view, and its place would be taken by an enormous cloud of black smoke, from out of the centre of which would fly in all directions iron segments of the shell, rocks, timber, and rubbish of every description. When the smoke cleared, the portion of the trench on which the eye had previously rested would have ceased to exist, or show nothing but a heap of rubbish without symmetry or form. At half-past twelve the bombardment was hotter than at any previous period throughout the morning, and it remained so until the moment of attack. The Keikwansan forts became entirely enveloped in and hidden from view by the smoke from the shells and shrapnel bursting over them, and it looked as if a great fire had broken out on the hills.

Shortly after twelve a stir became evident in all the Japanese parallels at the foot of the Russian positions. These had been comparatively empty during the morning, but now a stream of men began to wind their way along the tortuous road of saps leading from the second, third, and fourth lines far out in the Suishien valley to the front parallels, from which the attacking forces must debouch. The advance parallels soon became absolutely packed with men three and four deep, kneeling behind one another and leaning on their rifles,

straining the holding capacity of the trenches to the utmost. Their gaze was steadily fixed on the volcano-like summit of the hills, hardly visible even to them, on account of the smoke and dust hanging like a pall over the trenches and earthworks. The company flags were carefully unfurled by the officers and spread out flat, ready to be seized and carried forward at the head of the columns.

When the exact hour at which an assault is to be made is known, it makes the tension still greater: you wonder if it will be punctual, or if the artillery will be given an extra quarter of an hour to demolish the fortifications. The Japanese are, however, always punctual on occasions of this sort,—there is no hanging back: the officer in the trench, with his ear to the telephone, waits for the order to be received from the divisional commander, who is watching the effect of the artillery-fire from a specially selected position some little way behind. Everything is now done by telephone. The days of A.D.C.'s and gallopers are gone for ever. Bullets carry too far, and messages are too important to be intrusted to men galloping across the front of hostile batteries and rifle-pits. The general in command decides beforehand from which point he will direct operations, and there a bomb-proof shelter is erected, and also a telephone-house, which is connected with all the trenches and batteries. He can order the artillery to fire or to discontinue firing at any moment, and he can send forward his infantry by the same simple process. Then again the commander-in-chief, who will be directing the whole of the operations still farther back, among the artillery positions, may want to know the progress of an attack, and his wish can be

gratified two minutes after he has expressed it. The telephone-house, in its bomb-proof shelter, is the conning-tower of the divisional commander: without it, it would be almost impossible for him to direct operations during a siege, where he has to take up his stand right under the muzzles of modern artillery, and within easy range of hundreds of sharpshooters.

It is no easy matter for a battalion of soldiers to leave the cover of a parallel all at the same time, for there are generally no exits except at the ends, and from these the men must debouch in single file. The Japanese, however, always manage to get clear of a trench in a large body at the same moment, and unless you kept your eye very carefully fixed on the parallels, you will see the men half-way up the hill before you suspect the advance has begun. To facilitate an easy exit, some of the sand-bags are pulled away just before the advance; but, as a rule, directly the officer carrying the leading flag is seen outside the trench, the men jump over the breast-work on all sides and follow close on his heels, keeping well together. Some walk up quite slowly, while others immediately rush to the front and lead their comrades by many yards, as if eager to get the ordeal over and close with the enemy.

At 1 P.M. I saw the soldiers at the foot of P Fort, the little hill between Banrhusan East and North Keikwansan, leave cover and commence to move slowly forward. I then glanced at the other hills, and saw a mass of men just beyond the trench at the foot of Higashi Keikwansan, and yet more advancing on Q Work. All were moving forward without apparently meeting with any resistance. Up the slope of P Work one Japanese soldier was quite twenty

yards ahead of all the others, and when he arrived at the trench he jumped in and disappeared from view. Many more men followed, and five minutes after the advance had commenced P Work was in the hands of the Japanese.

Meanwhile, what was happening on Higashi Keikwansan? Looking again at that hill, I saw that the column had passed through the wire entanglement and was just entering the trench half-way up, which was deserted, the artillery-fire having driven out the Russians. Many men had fallen in the trail of the column, and were lying scattered about in all directions, some among the wire, some on the hillside, but by far the larger number close to the trench, where they had gone down in scores. It was easy to see that they were suffering terribly from an enfilading fire from the hills to the east, and also from maxims and riflemen lining the covered way. The advance did not, however, stop at the trench: the head of the column, led by three officers carrying the white flag embroidered in red with the Rising Sun, pressed on up the slopes in spite of the galling fire which was every moment thinning their ranks. The column, which at the foot of the hill had looked so compact and resolute, was now nothing but a straggling line of men without order or formation, obeying no command save that of their own heroic instincts to press on up the hill, following in the wake of the flags, which were still flying. The hillside looked as if a violent hailstorm were playing on it, from the dust thrown up by the bullets and shrapnel. Just below the escarpment of the fort a little group of about thirty or forty men, the survivors of all who had started, were collected: most of these were shot down

where they stood, all three flags collapsing at the same minute, and lying in a triangle on the hillside. The survivors of this forlorn hope did not hesitate, but commenced to climb the escarpment, which was very steep and difficult to ascend. A very few succeeded in clambering over the top, and disappeared from view, close to the muzzles of the two big guns which were mounted on the fort. Their bodies were almost immediately afterwards flung back on to the escarpment, and remained there spread-eagled like dead flies on a wall after the first frost. So ended the assault on Higashi Keikwansan. Reinforcements were hurried up the hill; but these got no farther than the first trench, and could not maintain their hold on it, being driven headlong down the hill after losing many men. It appeared that those men who did effect a passage into the fort were immediately mowed down by the fire of a maxim carefully placed in the rear of the work.

After the fight the hillside presented a ghastly spectacle. Men lay in heaps; and just below the escarpment, where the firing had been hottest, a bunch of dead and, I suppose, wounded remained, the sombre spot being relieved by the three red-and-white flags, which showed up against the green and khaki.

We must now follow the assault on Q Work. The soldiers left the trench at the foot of the hill in a body, just like their comrades on the other two positions; but as this slope was concave, they did not suffer so severely from rifle and machine-gun fire as the men on Higashi Keikwansan. I saw them mount the slope slowly, and when half-way up spread out to attack a wider front. This brought the men

on the wings under a heavy fire from the Chinese Wall, for many of them were advancing directly on it. A complete line of twenty or thirty men fell at the same time on the left, maintaining their formation so perfectly that it seemed as if they must have discovered a patch of dead ground and were merely lying down awaiting developments. This was not the case; for they lay there all the afternoon, and it became evident that they had all been killed while advancing in a line. On the right, individual soldiers made heroic dashes forward, always to be shot within two or three yards of the Chinese Wall, which proved fatal to so many that afternoon. The main body, keeping in the hollow ground, pressed up in comparative safety and reached the trench on the summit, just when the Japanese artillery, which had continued to bombard up to the last minute, was firing its final rounds. The leading officers and men immediately climbed into the trench and were lost to view. The work had apparently been abandoned by the Russians on account of the severity of the fire. Most of these men sat down outside the trench which their comrades had entered, and waited while the latter proceeded to pour oil over the wood-work and set it alight. It seemed as if this work would, like Ichinohe, remain in the hands of the Japanese; but this was not to be, for there was one weapon which the Russians had so far not brought to bear on the mass of infantry crowded in the hollow ground below the crest of the hill. This was the shrapnel: without any warning the little white clouds of smoke began, slowly at first, but in increasing numbers as more guns were brought to bear on the spot, to burst over the heads of this mass of men. The result was

instantaneous: the majority were simply wiped out where they sat, without attempting to move. Many of the survivors, I think, clambered over into the Russian trench, hoping to find shelter there; others rushed down the hill to regain their own parallel. A few reached cover, but the rest were picked off by the sharpshooters. The attack on this hill was not, however, abandoned at the first repulse; for a second body of men moved up the parallels, left cover, and rushed up the slope, following the course taken by their predecessors. But the shrapnel-fire was just as fatal to them as it had been to the first party: those who were not hit also endeavoured to regain their shelter. This process of reinforcing the dead was not discontinued even after the second disaster; for a third party went forward, loth to admit defeat while a chance of victory remained. The Japanese artillery had reopened on all the positions, and especially on the covered way and the ground behind, endeavouring to silence the Russian field-artillery which had been responsible for so much havoc among the infantry. This was not successful, for the third party met with the same fate, and simply swelled the number of killed and wounded on the hillside. It was then seen that Q Work could not be held, and all further attempts to take it were stopped; the ground was left to the dead and wounded; only the artillery bombarded as furiously as it had done in the morning. Either the reverse had upset the aim of the gunners, or else the continual firing had begun to tell on the rifling of the big howitzers, for the shooting became very bad. Shot after shot was sent just below the trench, right amongst the Japanese killed and wounded, finishing off those who were

still alive. This was a most unpleasant sight; for it became apparent that among the dead and wounded there were lying many who had not been hit at all, but had remained quiet on the chance of affairs taking a favourable turn, or waiting for nightfall, when they might go back to their lines under cover of darkness. When the Japanese artillery opened up on the trenches, and placed some shells right amongst their own dead and wounded, these men, unable any longer to keep their ground, were driven to run the gauntlet of the sharpshooters, which was a lesser evil than remaining under the fire of their own shells. In little groups of twos and threes they would get up and run down the slope as fast as possible, sometimes stopping half-way and sheltering in one of the numerous shell holes with which the surface was covered; then they would continue their dangerous passage. Most were shot, but some reached the shelter of the trench at the foot. It was a sad sight to see these men endeavouring to reach home and safety, especially so when a man would be picked off — as many were—within a few yards of his destination. All through the afternoon these dashes for cover were continued. Later in the day, when the artillery had once more ceased fire, the Russian riflemen returned to the trench, and coolly commenced to fire over the top, picking off the wounded, or any man they saw stirring, amid the heaps of slain. This caused still more men to essay the passage, many of whom would have done better to have waited for night, which was now rapidly closing in.

No one anticipated that the Japanese would attempt to storm the escarpment of the North Keikwansan Fort on October 30, when they were only in possession of

the caponiere chamber at the north-west corner of the ditch. During the previous night the sappers breached the wall of the chamber, to enable them to obtain access to the ditch. The Japanese had two lines of saps leading up to the position, one at the north-west corner and the other at the north-east. That at the north-east corner terminated in a tunnel, which led down to the caponiere chamber,—this latter, however, still remaining in the possession of the Russians, although a hole had been made in its roof. Parallels connected up the two saps; and on October 30 these were packed with Japanese sharpshooters, whose duty it was to keep down the fire of the Russians on the escarpment. The distance separating the opposing forces was so short that, in order to fire without exposing his body, each soldier had to lift his rifle above his head and fire at random, trusting to the shortness of the range to supply the place of proper aim.

No movement occurred on North Keikwansan until the attacks on the other positions had almost terminated. Then a party of Japanese soldiers suddenly appeared, climbing up the sheer face of the escarpment on its north front. If ever there was a desperate enterprise this surely was one. The escarpment was nearly 50 feet high; and granting that the infantry had succeeded in reaching the crest, they would have been immediately shot by the Russians lining it, who had only to place their rifles through the loopholes against the bodies of their opponents. The desperate band who essayed this impossible feat were never destined to reach the crest of the escarpment, for the Russians in the north-east caponiere chamber and the galleries picked them off one after another. The bodies of these unfortunate Japanese soldiers did not

slide back into the ditch after they were hit, for the surface of the escarpment was too broken up by shell-fire. They remained just where they fell, visible to the whole army, in such a natural posture that for a time it was hard to believe they were dead. These few men who reached the escarpment only to be shot, were all who attempted the assault on Keikwansan that day: the rest, warned by the fate of their comrades, saw that it was useless to advance. Whatever happened, the attack was abandoned, and the Russians left in victorious possession of the fort, except for the artillery, which continued to throw shells into the interior.

Meanwhile, about three in the afternoon, an interesting little interlude was enacted on P Fort, which had been captured so successfully at the commencement of the engagement. Without any apparent reason, the soldiers holding the captured work on the hill left their position in a body, and bolted down the slope. It is not fair to say that all left, for a few remained with the colours, and the redoubt was never occupied by the Russians. The majority, however, came tearing down the hill as if seized with a sudden panic. When it was seen what was happening, a fresh party of soldiers, led by their officers, left the trench at the foot of the hill, towards which those who were coming down were making their way, and doubled up to their support. The fugitives were checked in their rush by the wire which had only been partly cut, and this caused them to hesitate. Some passed through the gaps, but others, not even waiting for their turn, endeavoured to force their bodies underneath the strands. Many became for the time hopelessly entangled, and it was fortunate for them that the

ground afforded some shelter from the marksmen on Bodai and those lining the Chinese Wall, who would otherwise have picked them off as they lay struggling to free themselves from the wire. The main body, having passed through the obstacle, met the supports rushing up the hill just beneath it. Any one who had not watched the fight from the start would have imagined that the two forces were about to hurl themselves on one another with the bayonet. Instead of this, the ranks opened out sufficiently to allow the files to pass one another, the fugitives taking shelter in the trench which the supports had just vacated, and the supports reoccupying the redoubt.

As soon as the runaways had had time to gain breath and take a calm survey of their surroundings, they became correspondingly anxious to atone for their sudden panic and rejoin their comrades on the hill. Many, therefore, once more left the trench, and, keeping wide apart, made their way to the dead ground where the majority of the supports were mustered. The Russians managed to pick off several, but the majority escaped unscathed. It appeared that behind P Work was another work, from which the Russians had made a vigorous attack on the Japanese infantry. The latter, exposed to a heavy shrapnel-fire, and no doubt thinking of the terrible fate of the troops on the other hills, had abandoned the position, which might have led to disastrous results but for the splendid manner in which the supports checked the panic just at the critical moment.

The infantry fighting was over after this little incident and its satisfactory settlement; the big howitzers ceased fire, but the smaller guns continued to bombard until darkness had set in. There was a

very peculiar sunset over Port Arthur that evening; the forts were covered with a reddish glow caused partly by the immense amount of powder still hovering overhead and not dispersed by wind. From out of this haze the search-lights, which it had been thought the previous night would have changed hands before another sunrise, shone feebly, adding to the mysterious effect and the strange atmosphere. The Russians, by way of celebrating their success, commenced to burst their beautiful star shells, which had not been so much in evidence of late, over the Japanese lines. In the camps that I passed on my way from the front there was none of that cheerfulness which had been such a prominent feature in the days preceding the assault. The officers and men were obviously depressed by the result, and a feeling of despondency had settled over the army. The result had indeed been discouraging: out of the original six positions chosen for assault, the attack on two, Nirusan and Shojusan, had been abandoned through no fault but a miscalculation of strength. Out of the four positions which had eventually been assaulted, only one, the most unimportant, had been taken; the attacks on the other three had been repulsed at the cost of thousands of lives. This poor result had been obtained after four days of incessant bombardment from some of the largest guns ever employed in war, and after an expenditure of close on a million dollars in ammunition alone. The bombardment had culminated in one of the severest concentrated fires ever poured on forts and entrenchments; yet, after all this, the Russians could not be driven from their bomb-proofs, and the Japanese infantry were simply shot down like rabbits when

they endeavoured to obtain a foothold on these half-destroyed works. What, then, everyone was asking on the night of October 30, would be the next move in the game? Would another bombardment and another assault be ordered, or would the heads of the army become reconciled to the fact that the Japanese infantry soldier, in spite of his superlative qualities, is only flesh and blood after all, and must share the same fate as the troops of all other nations if sent against impossible positions? I noticed that the huge piles of ammunition by the side of the guns had dwindled to a few scattered rounds, so this did not look like a fresh attack on the morrow.

When the morning of October 31 dawned the uncertainty still prevailed. The sides of the hills which had been attacked on the previous day presented a truly ghastly spectacle: the dead lay just where they had fallen, and many of the wounded who had been unable to crawl back to the lines during the night. No armistice was allowed. The feeling between the soldiers had become too bitter to allow the Red Cross to do its work unmolested. Volunteers went out at night and endeavoured to assist the wounded as they did in August, but the firing was kept up the whole time, which rendered the task both difficult and dangerous. No doubt the Russians would have liked to have crept out and collected the three flags lying amid a heap of dead at the foot of the escarpment of the Higashi Keikwansan Fort, but they had not dared to do so, for the Japanese laid their rifles on the ground and fired up the hill, to prevent men leaving the fort.

The guns commenced to bombard the forts at nine o'clock, but the big howitzers were firing very slowly,

as if feeling the want of ammunition. Their shells were directed on the North Keikwansan Fort. The front trenches were almost entirely deserted, and it hardly seemed as if any further fighting would take place; but later in the morning a mass of infantry were pushed forward through the saps leading to North Keikwansan, and remained there stationary for some time while the artillery continued to bombard. Suddenly a bright sheet of flame, followed by a great cloud of white smoke and then a deafening report, came from the east corner of the ditch. I could not understand at the time what this explosion was, because the fort had not changed its appearance in the least when it emerged again to view out of the dense clouds of smoke. Afterwards I found out what had happened. The Japanese sappers in the caponiere chamber at the north-west angle of the ditch crept along the ditch and endeavoured to blow a hole in the caponiere chamber at the north-east angle of the ditch, and thus force the Russians to evacuate it. In this they were only partly successful. It had, however, one very strange result: a burly Russian appeared walking on the top of the escarpment, who did not seem to have the least idea what had happened or where he was going. He made straight towards the edge of the fort, and then discovered his mistake, for he retraced his steps along the top of the escarpment looking for cover, but it was too late. The Japanese marksmen had caught a glimpse of him through the smoke and commenced to fire at the unfortunate man, who fell almost immediately pierced by many bullets. I suppose this soldier had been dazed by the explosion, or his bomb-proof had been injured so that he was forced to

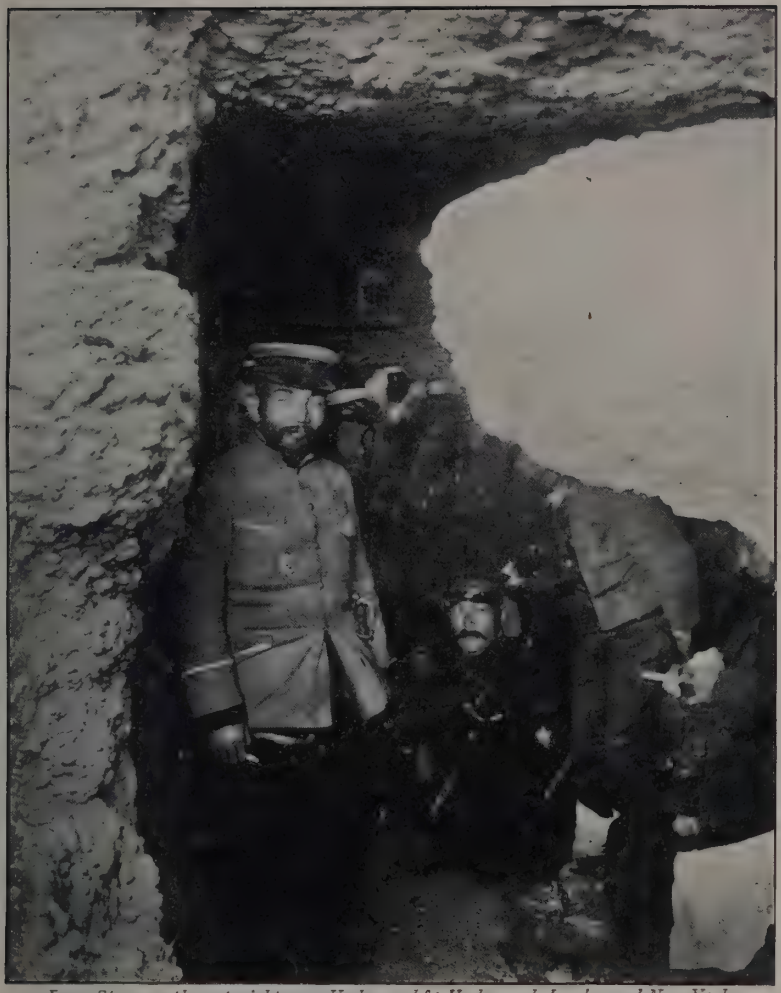
leave it and did not know what he was doing, when he came out and exposed himself to full view. Before the smoke of the explosion had cleared away some Japanese soldiers appeared in exactly the same position on the escarpment of the fort, where their comrades had attempted to climb up on the previous day. The same simple process of placing rifles through the loopholes and pulling the trigger was again gone through, and those who did not slide down to the bottom in time remained with their comrades on the sandy slope—dead. Nothing could have been finer than the manner in which these men went to certain death, but the object of repeating that which had already signally failed is hard to see. Hundreds of men were pushed forward to the parallel at the foot of Q Work while this second attempt on North Keik-wansan was made, and it was thought that another assault on that position was contemplated, but it came to nothing, and with this second repulse the great attack was finished.

CHAPTER XVI.

SAPPING AND MINING.

The interval between the tragedy of October 30 and the still greater tragedy of November 26 may well be described as the underground epoch. During this period of nearly a month the Japanese sappers were busy preparing the way for the next infantry attack. They tunnelled down towards the counterscarp works, and either blew them up or gradually forced the Russians out of them by hand-to-hand fighting. These engineering operations, the most difficult of the siege, were carried out against North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan.

The counterscarp defences of North Keikwansan will be readily understood by a glance at the plan of that fort. There are three caponiere chambers, situated at the south-east, north-east, and north-west angles of the ditch. The loopholed chambers at the north-east and north-west angles were partly built out into the ditch, and the rifles swept it on all sides with their fire. They were constructed of solid concrete about six feet thick, and were loopholed for marksmen and machine-guns. The two chambers were connected to one another by a gallery nine feet in width, also constructed



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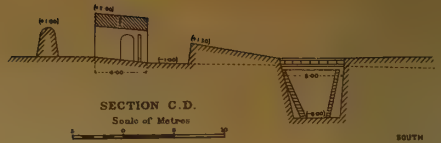
THE HALF DESTROYED CAPONIERE GALLERIES OF THE NORTH KEIKWANSAN FORT,

SHOWING THE JAPANESE IN POSSESSION.

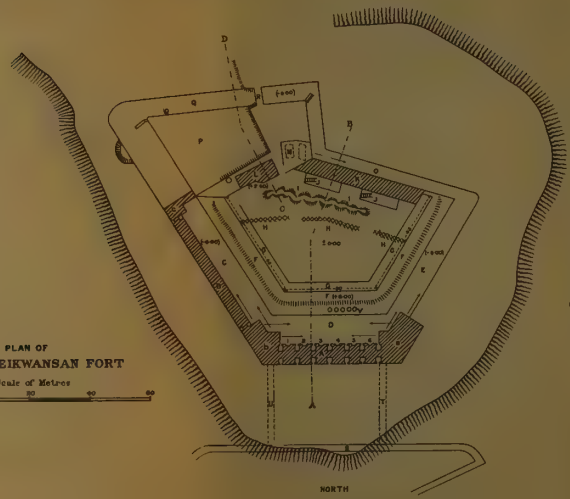


SECTION C.D.

Scale of Metres

0 5 10

SOUTH



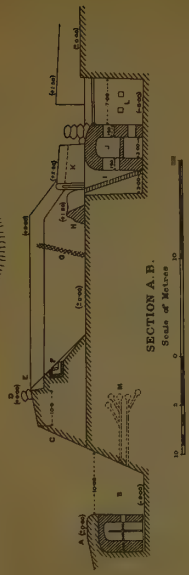
NORTH

PLAN OF

NORTH KEIKWANSAN FORT

Scale of Metres

50 30 0 30 60 90



SECTION A.B.

Scale of Metres

0 5 10

KEY TO NORTH KEIKWANSAN.

A Counterscarp defences north ditch, showing (a) north-west caponiere chamber; (b) north-east caponiere chamber, and (c) the connecting [illegible] [illegible]

B Long gallery east ditch, not divided into alcoves, showing (c) south-east caponiere chamber.

C East ditch.

D North ditch.

E West ditch.

F Escarpment.

G Infantry banquette.

H Wire entanglement.

I Protected machine gun line.

J Ladders leading down to entrance to barrack.

K Two storied concrete barrack.

L Bomb-proof kitchen.

M Hand lift from underground magazine.

O The ditch in rear of barrack into which the windows looked.

R Wooden bridge over ditch giving access to hills behind.

S Japanese advance parallel.

T Japanese tunnel to north-west caponiere chamber.

U Japanese tunnel to north-east caponiere chamber.

V Japanese mines, December 18th, 1904.

KEY TO SECTION OF NORTH KEIKWANSAN.

A Caponiere gallery north ditch.

B North ditch.

C Escarpment.

D Head cover.

E Banquette.

F Bomb-proofs.

G Wire entanglement.

H Machine gun line.

I Ladder leading to barrack.

J Two-storied concrete barrack.

K Earth on barrack.

L Ditch in rear of barrack.

M [illegible]

of solid concrete. This gallery was divided into six alcoves by buttresses built out at right angles to the counterscarp wall. An entrance three feet wide was left between each alcove, which enormously added to its strength; and if the besiegers captured one of these alcoves, the garrison could block up the narrow entrance between it and the next, and thus defend each one successively. The alcoves were loopholed, and commanded the ditch. The long gallery running the length of the east counterscarp, connecting the south-east caponiere chamber with the north-east, was somewhat different in construction to that in the north counterscarp: it was not divided into alcoves, and for that reason could not be defended so easily.

The tales of the underground warfare waged in the caponiere galleries of the North Keikwansan Fort are almost past belief, and illustrate the organised courage and resourcefulness of the Japanese soldier better possibly than any other event during the siege. While an attack is in progress many men move forward at the same time, and the operations are carried out in view of the entire army, all of which serves to nerve on the soldier to do his best; but underground warfare is a very different matter. There are no spectators, and the soldiers act by themselves, thus losing the moral force derived from the companionship of large numbers. For an entire month, in the fetid atmosphere of narrow concrete cellars, with the ever-present danger of mines, amid the bursting of dynamite hand-grenades, and exposed to death from bullet and bayonet, the Japanese sapper struggled, unobserved by the world, to drive his equally stubborn opponent out of these underground works. There were no witnesses of the many heroic incidents which marked the course of the struggle, and

it is almost impossible to render intelligible an account of what took place.

I have already briefly stated the position of the combatants in the counterscarp works of North Keikwansan during the assault of October 30. Throughout October the Japanese had gradually sapped their way towards the doomed fort, and when they could proceed no farther above ground, they commenced to tunnel towards the ditch. The Russians endeavoured to check this movement by continuous countermining, but, with one exception, the countermines were not very successful, and many were discovered before they could be exploded, or else the electric wires had become worn out. On October 23 the Russians exploded an ordinary ship's torpedo under the Japanese tunnel, destroying a large portion of it and killing or wounding twenty-eight men. This explosion had, however, an unexpected result, for it made a small hole in the concrete roof of the north-west caponiere chamber. The Japanese proceeded to enlarge the hole, and quickly forced the Russians to evacuate the chamber by pouring a machine-gun fire, and throwing hand-grenades through the hole in the roof. The next problem was to enter the neutral chamber, which was swept by the fire of the Russians who had taken up their stand in No. 6 alcove. Sand-bags were thrown through the hole in the roof, and when a sufficient number had been piled up to mask the fire of the Russian sharpshooters, sappers dropped through the hole; and although some were shot, others succeeded in pushing the bags towards the narrow entrance between the chamber and No. 6 alcove, entirely cutting off the communication between the two. The next object of the Japanese was to gain access to the ditch, for there was no en-

trance from the north-west caponiere chamber to the latter. On October 26 a mine was exploded in the counterscarp wall of the chamber, and a hole made which enabled the sappers to gain the ditch.

On October 30 the Japanese also succeeded in piercing a small hole through the roof of the north-east caponiere chamber, and drove out the Russians by a machine-gun fire. They could not enter it themselves, because it was swept by the fire of the Russians still holding the north gallery, and also by the fire of those holding the east gallery. Therefore for some time it remained neutral ground. The problem which confronted the Japanese was how to advance from the captured north-west chamber and drive the Russians out of the six alcoves which lay between that chamber and the neutral north-east chamber. It was impossible to take the alcoves in detail on account of the hand-grenades employed by the Russians, which burst with fearful effect in the contracted area, asphyxiating with their fumes those who were not torn to pieces by their explosion. The Japanese, after a brief experience of the deadly effect of these grenades, saw that, if they attempted to drive the Russians out in detail, it would take weeks, and might also lead to the almost total destruction of their corps of sappers. They therefore set to work to think out some more economical method of bringing about the desired result. The principle adopted was to sever the communication between the gallery on the north ditch from the gallery on the east ditch, which were connected by the neutral caponiere chamber at the north-east angle. This once accomplished, the Russians in the north gallery would be completely cut off, and would be obliged to surrender or die of starvation.

I have previously related how a few soldiers essayed the desperate feat of climbing up the escarpment and storming the fort on October 30. When they saw it would be impossible to capture the position by assault without first clearing the Russians out of the counterscarp defences, the sappers made their plans accordingly. During the night of the 31st they again crept into the ditch through the hole in the north-west caponiere chamber, and proceeded carefully along the north face of the counterscarp, keeping well below the level of the loopholes. It may be asked why these men were not shot by the Russians in the east gallery, who were in a position to fire directly on them. The explanation is that, as the caponiere chamber at the north-east angle was built out into the ditch and was neutral ground, the fire of the Russians in the east gallery was masked, and therefore the Japanese sappers were able to work unmolested. They stealthily made a small hole in the concrete wall of No. 1 alcove, and speedily forced the Russians to retire to No. 2 alcove, where they entrenched themselves behind a wall of sand-bags. The hole was enlarged sufficiently to enable a man to crawl through; but the problem which confronted the sappers was a serious one: how could they pass through the hole and enter No. 1 alcove as long as it was swept by the fire of the Russian marksmen entrenched behind a wall of sand-bags in No. 2 alcove?

What I have seen of the Japanese soldier in the field has convinced me that in a peculiar type of courage, that which is required to undertake ventures of a particularly nerve-trying character, he is far and away ahead of any other soldier in the world. I do not think that the Japanese soldier's forte is dash:

on occasions a little more of that quality, which is supposed to be the especial attribute of the Irishman, would have been invaluable to him. But in organised courage he excels. He seems to take an especial delight in preparing for some desperate enterprise and putting it into execution, although the method he adopts assures immediate destruction to himself. A captain seeing his men driven back during one of the attacks on a Russian trench, determined to sacrifice himself to obtain victory for his side. He tied as many hand-grenades about him as he could conveniently carry, and one of his men lit all the fuses simultaneously. The captain then hurled himself on the enemy. The grenades, bursting together in the Russian trench, inflicted terrible execution. The position was taken. The captain, of course, paid for his gallantry with his life. To carry out a scheme of that sort must require a peculiarly high form of courage.

The sappers, during the underground struggles for the caponiere galleries of North Keikwansan, displayed the same type of heroism as the captain whose story I have just related. In order to enter No. 1 alcove and block up the entrance to No. 2, which the Russians held, a sapper was pushed through the hole in the wall of No. 1 by his comrades outside: he held in front of his head a sand-bag, which he gradually pressed towards the line of sand-bags behind which the Russian infantry were entrenched. When he could not get farther another soldier was pushed in feet first, and placing his feet against those of the first sapper, the two were pushed still farther into the interior until they were within a few feet of the enemy. More men and sand-bags followed until a wall was gradually constructed, but not before the Russians had discovered

the ruse and attempted to defeat it by a shower of hand-grenades. Many lives were lost, but the wall was finally finished. The Russians then abandoned No. 2 alcove and retired to No. 3. Imagine the position of the first sapper pushed through the hole by his feet. In the darkness of the night he was entering an underground cellar swept by the fire of sharpshooters and exposed to hand-grenades. The sole thing between him and immediate destruction was one wretched sand-bag, which might protect him from a bullet, but which was useless against grenades.

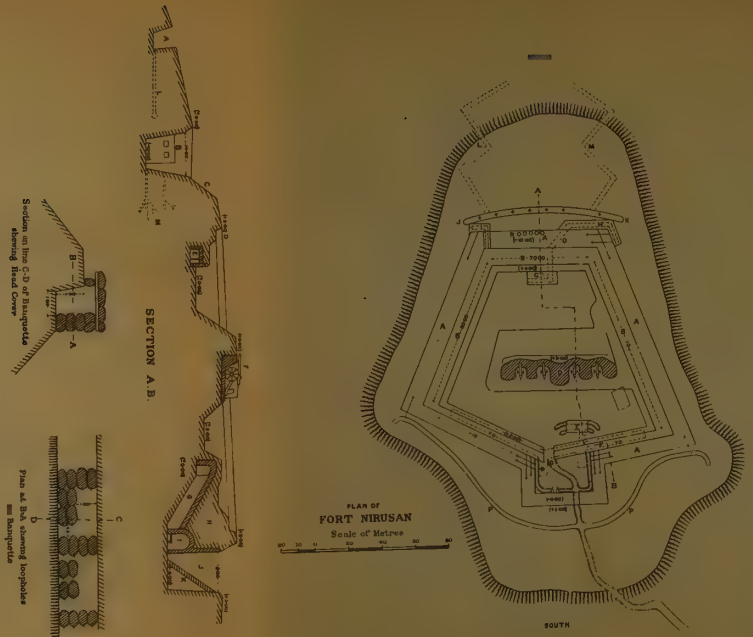
Once the communication between the north gallery and the north-east caponiere chamber had been severed, it was an easy matter for the Japanese to enlarge the hole in the roof, throw sand-bags into the interior, enter the chamber, and drive the Russians down the east gallery, where they proceeded to entrench themselves behind a wall of sand-bags. The unfortunate Russians, shut up in the alcoves between the two caponiere chambers on the north ditch, were speedily killed or starved, for there was no retreat open to them, and apparently they refused to surrender, or no notice was taken of their appeal. With the capture of the north gallery the Japanese sappers came to the conclusion that, for the time at any rate, they had had enough of this underground warfare. They therefore determined to leave the Russians unmolested in the east gallery, and merely to sever connection between the east and north ditches by constructing a high wall of sand-bags from the north-east caponiere chamber across the ditch to the escarpment. A steel door gave access to the ditch from the north-east caponiere chamber. The Russians speedily discovered the move of their opponents, and endeavoured to frustrate it by

constructing a wall of sand-bags from the south-east caponiere chamber to the escarpment. It was the object of each side to finish their wall first, mount a gun, and batter their opponent's wall to pieces. It was a close race, but the Japanese had the start, and accomplished the desired result. A mountain gun was brought into the north ditch in sections, quickly put together, and before the Russians had had time to do likewise their wall of sand-bags was crumbling to pieces under the well-aimed shots of the Japanese gunners. This incident really ended the fighting for the possession of the counterscarp works on North Keikwansan, for the Russians only retained possession of the south-east caponiere chamber, and could not in any way interfere with the operations which the Japanese now proceeded to undertake against the escarpment of the fort. They ran a tunnel across the north ditch, and sappers were soon at work burrowing their way under the escarpment to prepare a shaft for the mines.

North Keikwansan was in many ways the strongest of all the positions attacked during the siege, because it was in the most advanced state of completion when the Japanese arrived before the fortress. Nirusan and Shojusan were larger works than North Keikwansan, but their counterscarp defences were not of the same formidable character. When the Japanese successfully captured the upper Russian trench-lines protecting the ditches of those forts on October 26, they were unaware of the existence of caponiere chambers in the counterscarp walls. Their plan was to fill in the ditches in four days with rubbish, earth, corn-stalks, and sand-bags, and then to attack the escarpment over the causeway thus created. But as fast as they flung rubbish into the ditch it was dragged out by the

Russians in the caponiere chambers, and passed into the interior of the fort through underground tunnels which gave access to the counterscarp works. Apart from this it is extremely doubtful if the Japanese could have filled in the great ditch of Nirusan, which was thirty feet wide and over forty deep. The ditch of Shojusan was not of such great dimensions—only about twenty feet deep.

When the discovery of the counterscarp defences on Nirusan and Shojusan was made, the engineers saw it would be impossible to take the forts without resorting to mining. They had, however, learnt many salutary lessons during the operations against North Keikwansan, and they took full advantage of them when proceeding against Nirusan and Shojusan. They determined not to expose the diminishing corps of sappers to any more of those underground struggles such as had been waged in the caponiere galleries of North Keikwansan, and which resulted in so many casualties. They determined to obviate the necessity by tunnelling down at several points along the counterscarp wall, and then blowing wall and caponiere chambers into the ditch, thus filling it up and preparing a causeway for the infantry. The 18th Brigade, whose special field of operations was on Nirusan, experienced considerable difficulty in maintaining their position on the slopes of that hill on account of the heavy shell-fire concentrated on it from the western group of forts. The hill on which Nirusan stood is of hard rock, and has only a thin layer of earth two or three feet deep. The saps had therefore to be raised above the ground instead of sunk into it. The Russians took full advantage of this fact, and did their best to destroy the Japanese saps as they were pushed up the



KEY TO NIRUSAN.

- A Ditch.
- B Escarpment.
- C Entrance to tunnel leading to counterscarp works.
- D Fortress artillery mounted in concrete.
- E Entrance to stairway leading to barrack.
- F Concrete barrack below ground.
- G Entrance to barrack from rear of fort.
- H North-east caponiere chamber.
- I North-west caponiere chamber.
- J-K Russian trench line protecting ditch defences, called by the Japanese a screen, captured October 26th, 1904.
- L-M Japanese saps leading up to the screen after its capture.
- O Underground passage connecting counterscarp defences to interior of fort.
- P Reserve infantry trenches.
- R The two shafts and five Japanese mines, December 28th, 1904.
- \+ Seven Japanese mines which destroyed the counterscarp.

KEY TO SECTION OF NIRUSAN.

- A Russian trench line protecting ditch defences captured, October 26th, 1904.
- B Ditch.
- C Escarpment.
- D Infantry banquette.
- E Bomb-proofs.
- F Fortress artillery mounted in concrete.
- G Stairway to barrack.
- H Earth piled on barrack.
- I One-storied concrete barrack.
- J Ditch in rear of barrack.
- K Iron ladder leading to hills behind.
- L Japanese mine shafts, November 20th, 1904.
- M The two Japanese mine shafts and five mines, December 28th, 1904.

slope. In this they were constantly successful; but just as fast as the saps were levelled, the sappers renewed them, but only at the cost of a great number of casualties per day to the working-parties. Two lines of saps were run up the hill from the railway embankment at its foot, the one terminating close to the north-east angle of the ditch, and the other at the north-west. The sappers utilised the captured Russian trench-line at the edge of the ditch as the parallel connecting the two. From this trench-line they commenced to sink mine shafts down towards the counterscarp wall. The work was very difficult and arduous, because the engineers had to excavate solid rock for the mine shafts. Seven shafts were sunk along the counterscarp wall of Nirusan, and a similar number on Shojusan. It will be seen by the plan of Nirusan that there are caponiere chambers at the north-east and north-west angles of the ditch, both of which had a separate communication by tunnel to the interior of the fort. The caponiere chambers were not, however, connected to one another by a long gallery as on North Keikwansan. Doubtless it had been the intention of the Russians to build such a gallery, but war broke out before it could be accomplished.

The absence of this gallery greatly simplified the task of the Japanese sappers, for it prevented the Russians from countermining against their mine shafts, as had been done on North Keikwansan. As long as the shafts were kept clear of the caponiere chambers at either corner of the ditch, or rather only placed sufficiently close to them to ensure their destruction when the time came for blowing them up, they were safe from countermines. In order to countermine against the Japanese shafts, the Russians would have

been obliged to enter the ditch and then excavate the solid rock of the counterscarp wall. The Japanese in the captured trenches on the edge of the ditches would have speedily rendered the ditches untenable by hand-grenades and rifle-fire. It will therefore be readily understood that nothing like the same difficulties confronted the Japanese sappers on Nirusan and Shojusan as had confronted the sappers on North Keikwansan. I have no plan of Shojusan, but the counterscarp defences were similar to those of Nirusan, and exactly the same method of procedure was adopted by the Japanese. The Russians soon found out what was taking place on the counterscarp side of the ditch; and although they were not in a position to countermine, they did their best to hinder the work by the concentrated shell-fire of their heavy guns, and by throwing a continual shower of grenades from the escarpment of the fort, over the thirty feet of ditch, at the working-parties in their parallel at the edge of the counterscarp.

It was a great problem how to protect the working-parties from the devastation of these dynamite grenades, and many ingenious devices, more or less effective, were contrived. The most successful method was the invention of an engineer, and consisted of a wire screen from which the grenades bounced back into the ditches; or else steel plates, which the explosions failed to shatter. Nevertheless many grenades found their way into the trenches in spite of the screens, and soldiers were stationed with long poles at the end of which was a bucket containing water, which was poured over the grenade before it could burst, and the fuse thus extinguished. With the explosion of grenades, the bursting of shells, and the continual sniping,

it can be readily understood that the casualties among the working-parties were very heavy during this period of sapping and mining against the permanent forts. At the commencement of the siege the Japanese sappers numbered some two thousand in all, but after a couple of months of work they were reduced to a few hundred men, many of whom were hardly fit to keep their places in the ranks, and in order to fill up the vacancies a large number of sappers were despatched from the north and definitely attached to the Third Army.

The capture of Hachimachayama rendered it extremely difficult for the Russians to make successful sorties against the working-parties on Nirusan, for in order to do so they were obliged to come out of New Banrhusan and pass right across the front of Hachimachayama. On Shojusan the case was different: there the Russians could leave the Covering Work, pass down the slopes of the hill, wheel to the east, and attack the Japanese in flank. This they constantly did, fighting with the utmost bravery and determination, setting back the work of days in a few hours by the destruction of trench-lines.

In spite of all these obstacles, the mines sunk into the counterscarp wall of Shojusan were ready to be exploded on November 17. The operation was carried out successfully at 4.30 P.M., and provided a very effective spectacle. The explosion was partly successful, but the charges used were too light: only a portion of the counterscarp wall was blown into the ditch, filling it up to within a few feet of the top of the escarpment. The sappers immediately commenced to dig trenches through the mass of *débris* towards the escarpment.

On November 20 the mines sunk on Nirusan were

also exploded, and much heavier charges were used. The result was more effective: the entire counterscarp wall was tumbled into the ditch, filling it up very nearly to the level of the escarpment. It was found, however, that the mines had not been placed in sufficiently close proximity to the caponiere chamber at the north-west angle of the ditch, and it remained undestroyed. As long as the Russians held that chamber the Japanese were enfiladed every time they attempted to cross the heaps of *débris* to mine under the escarpment. This was a serious matter; but the inconvenience only lasted for a few days. Some sappers crept out and managed to take the machine-gun in the chamber through a hole in the roof, while the Russians were asleep. A few days later a small hole was bored in the concrete, a charge of gun-cotton inserted, and the entire chamber blown up.

By November 20 the Japanese had actually commenced to tunnel under the escarpments of North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan. In a few weeks these mines would have been ready to be exploded. Yet before this work had been in progress six days the old reckless spirit once more obtained the upper hand, and thousands of lives were sacrificed in a vain effort to rush the escarpments of these forts in order to do away with the necessity of sitting quietly down for a few days longer and waiting for the completion of the mine shafts.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOSPITALS AND TRANSPORT.

The Japanese hospital authorities keep in view one main object, and sacrifice every other consideration to it—to hurry all sick and wounded men away from the front as soon as possible. They consider, however seriously a man may be injured or however sick he may be, that it is better to take the risk of transporting him in this dangerous condition to a base hospital, where there is every facility for giving him proper treatment, rather than keep him in a field hospital at the front. The nearest base hospital was at Dalny, where nearly all the undestroyed houses, churches, and halls had been taken over by the military authorities to be utilised for this purpose. The base hospitals at Dalny were not used in the full sense attaching to the term; they rather formed a temporary depot, half-way to Japan, from which the patients were conveyed as soon as possible on to the hospital ships. Only the slightly wounded men, who were likely to recover in a few weeks, were kept at Dalny. A soldier brought from the front by train from Port Arthur or from the Manchurian armies would await at Dalny his turn to be taken to Japan in one of the hospital ships, which continually plied between that port and the

home country. The Japanese employed eighteen hospital ships, and these vessels were fitted out with every appliance necessary for the comfort of the sick and wounded. Each vessel had a head surgeon and a surgical staff, with as many as twenty or thirty Japanese hospital nurses, trained by the Red Cross Society of Japan. Some of the hospital ships in which the lying-down cases were carried were fitted out with operating-rooms, so that, should necessity arise, operations could be performed at sea.

The treatment of a soldier wounded before Port Arthur was as follows. If he were shot in the trenches the stretcher-bearers, who were also skilled dressers, would at once convey him to one of the dressing-stations in the trenches. Here the surgeon would attend to his injuries, and immediately his wound was dressed he would be carried back on a stretcher through the trenches to the headquarters of his division. At the headquarters of the divisions were the nearest field hospitals, and the wounded soldier would at once be taken to one of these and have his wound re-dressed. If it were absolutely necessary, an operation was performed on the spot; but unless it was a matter of life or death the soldier would be placed in a tent for two or three hours, or sometimes for a whole night, to rest. Every morning the wounded men were conveyed by Chinese stretcher-bearers, who assembled in large numbers each morning at the field hospitals at the divisional headquarters, to one of the villages behind the line. On the journey they were accompanied by two or three dressers with water-flasks and bandages in case it was necessary to attend to a man *en route*, and also to keep the Chinamen in order in case the latter set their bur-

dens down by the wayside. I have seen as many as 200 wounded men conveyed in one long procession in this manner. While passing over the Shell Strewn Road, and other exposed ground, the stretcher-bearers were made to move some fifty yards apart, in order not to provide a target for the enemy's fire. When the danger-points were passed, the line again closed up. Those cases which were not serious, and required no further dressing until their arrival at the railway station, were conveyed direct from the field hospitals to the train. On the days on which assaults were made, the scenes behind the divisional ridges where the field hospitals were situated were rather unpleasant, and resembled a butcher's shop. The surgeons prepared everything in readiness for the reception of the wounded. They put on white aprons, rolled up their sleeves, sharpened their knives, and there in the open air awaited their victims. While the roar of battle was still at its height, the stretcher-bearers commenced to arrive from the Suishien valley, and to set down their burdens outside the tents. Here they were attended to as fast as possible by the surgeons. The tents, stretchers, and uniforms of the surgeons and hospital attendants became covered with blood, and pools of it lay around in the neighbourhood. Of all spectacles in warfare, these dressing-stations near the fighting-line are the most revolting, for there is none of the order and spotless cleanliness to be found in a base hospital. The work has to be done quickly, and when a number of wounded soldiers arrive simultaneously, there can never be sufficient surgeons to attend to all at once.

In the villages close to the artillery line other hospitals had been established, primarily for the reception of

men wounded in the batteries. These being provided with operating-rooms and accommodation for serious cases, were also used as "station hospitals" for some of the worst cases from the front line. Cases for operation here awaited their turn in lines outside the operating-room. Each operating-room or -tent contained two tables, and two operations could be performed at one time. Everything was kept spotlessly clean and neat by the staff of orderlies. The hospitals of the Japanese army have been brought to the highest point of hygienic perfection ever attained in war, and the number of men who died from septic poisoning caused by dirty instruments or other similar avoidable causes could be counted on five fingers. Alongside of each operating-table was a wooden trough, through which there flowed a continual stream of water, mixed with disinfectant, from a barrel at one end of the tent. Every piece of bandage, flesh, bone, bullet, or shell extracted from the patient was immediately flung into this stream, which passed into another barrel having a strainer at the bottom, which retained all solid matter, and allowed the liquid to pass on in order to go through another process, and then again make its way past the operating-table. On the other side of the table were pans of antiseptic, continually changed, in which were laid the operating instruments. All bandages were kept in sealed glass or tin cases, and only taken out to go through a heating process before being used.

As soon as a man had been operated upon he was placed in a tent for several hours, or sometimes for a night, and then he would be again examined by the surgeon. If he was in a condition to be removed he was conveyed to the railway station, there placed on a train, and conveyed to Dalny. Those men to whom

removal would have meant death were kept in a tent or Chinese house near the station hospital, and generally this meant their cases were hopeless. By this method of removing all but hopeless cases to the base, the hospitals at the front were kept perfectly clear and ready for new arrivals, and the accommodation was always sufficient, even after a general attack, for the thousands of wounded.

The surgeons never wasted time over hopeless cases: they simply made the sufferer as comfortable as possible, to await his end. When a wounded man was carried in and laid on the operating-table the surgeon at once took off the field-dressing and examined his wound. If he saw the case was quite hopeless he would draw in his breath through his teeth, in that manner peculiar to the Japanese when they do not desire to make a direct statement. It sounds like a bad-mannered man taking hot soup. When the wounded man heard the surgeon draw in his breath in that manner he knew at once his days were numbered, and with remarkable stoicism immediately became resigned to his fate. The surgeon then arranged him in the most comfortable manner and ordered the stretcher-bearers to carry him out. Before leaving the tent the soldier was given a drink from a cask kept at one side of the tent: this contained saki and morphine or some other pain destroyer. Nearly all the hopeless cases were given this final drink if they were in a condition to swallow it. The wounded man, as he left the tent, generally said "Syonora" (Good-bye) to the surgeon, who returned the salutation, and with this final salute to the world he was carried out. Outside the operating-tent the crowd of wounded waiting their turn could always tell

the coming fate of a comrade by the tent he was placed in. There was one over which might have been written, "He who enters here leaves hope behind." It was exclusively reserved for the dying, who were laid out in rows. It was a horrible sight, especially in the summer, to look inside these tents of hopeless cases and see the sufferers covered with flies; but as a rule, in spite of their movements and contortions, they suffered little, as the majority were unconscious.

The Japanese hospital orderlies are all highly trained, and one of the most noticeable facts about them is the extreme interest they take in their work. When things were slack and only a few isolated cases were on hand, the surgeons often drew the dressers round them and explained points about the particular case in hand. Even when there were no wounded I have frequently seen the surgeons giving instruction in rolling bandages, handling instruments, and dressing. A Japanese is always willing to learn: whether it be in the middle of a battle or in the middle of the night, he will seek instruction on some point he fails to understand.

If the Chinese inhabitants of the Liautung Peninsula suffered by the struggle in their midst, they will carry away the happiest recollections of the Japanese hospitals. For the first time probably in the history of the country they found placed at their disposal and always at hand proper medical attention. The Japanese surgeons were always ready to attend to their wants, especially if it was a child who was sick or injured. One day I saw a little girl brought in by her distracted parents: she had fallen into some boiling water, and nothing but immediate skilled attention could have saved her life. A Japanese surgeon stopped

an unimportant case on which he was engaged to attend to the sufferer. The process of cleaning the burns and wrapping the child in oil bandages must have taken over an hour; but the surgeon, in spite of his many duties, could not have displayed more care and attention had he been the recipient of a hundred-guinea fee for the case.

There was no "hospital train" on the railway to Dalny, the wounded being conveyed in open trucks. When the weather became almost arctic in severity, the Japanese brought over from Japan a number of closed-in trucks, and in these the more serious cases were conveyed. Nevertheless their sufferings from cold, and from the jolting of the cars, must have been very considerable. No doubt the hospital arrangements of the Japanese army were as excellent as has been stated, but it must not be forgotten that the task of managing the hospitals and transporting sick and wounded by train is immeasurably simplified if you are able to take such liberties with your sick and wounded as the Japanese were wont to do. Many European soldiers treated in the same manner as the Japanese would undoubtedly have succumbed from the combined effects of their wounds and the rough transport which conveyed them to the hospital ships.

Dalny itself changed very much for the better after the Japanese had occupied it for a month or so. The streets presented a busy scene from morning to night, for the commissariat officials had the immense task of feeding not only General Nogi's army, but also the armies of Marshal Oyama. Thousands of Chinese carts blocked the streets, conveying stores from the quay to the railway station; hundreds of yelling coolies loaded up the empty trains, which had returned from Port

Arthur or from the north laden with wounded and sick. Alongside the quays were always to be seen two or three large transports and numbers of small craft. These were unloaded with truly astonishing rapidity by gangs of Japanese soldiers. There is no trait of the Japanese character which is more marked than that of being just as ready to work as to fight. If the disagreeable task fell to his lot of unloading transports, and carrying sack after sack of rice or cases of tinned meat on his head, he set about it as if it were pleasure. Very noticeable at the quays were the men belonging to the unfortunate 8th Osaka Regiment, which had failed to attack the New Banrhusan Fort on the night of August 23rd. Now they were turned on to unload the food which was to feed the men who would advance when ordered to do so. In the neighbourhood of the quay huge pyramids of stores had been collected, and covered with tarpaulin to protect them from the rain and snow. Miles of temporary sheds had been quickly constructed, in which the more perishable articles, and the ammunition, were stored. When I left Dalny for Japan at the termination of the siege, I was told that the Japanese had sufficient supplies in the town to feed all their armies in Manchuria for a period of six months, supposing the sea communication should be cut by the arrival of the Baltic Fleet. On my return to Japan I learnt that another three months' supplies were thrown into Manchuria between the termination of the siege of Port Arthur and the arrival of Rodjestvensky. Thus if the Russians had come off victorious in the battle of the Sea of Japan, Oyama could have gone on fighting for nearly nine months.

Two goods trains left Dalny daily for Port Arthur, one in the morning and one at night, and they

accomplished the journey in about three hours. Immediately a train reached Chorashi station, a horde of coolies literally flung themselves upon the carriages and proceeded to unload the trucks. When the load consisted of bags of rice a perfect pandemonium reigned; for the coolies, entering into the spirit of the game, hurled the sacks down off the train, frequently burying their friends, who were supposed to catch them, and several Chinamen were injured in this manner. Ten minutes after the arrival of a train not a sack of rice or a case of meat or biscuits would be left in any of the trucks. The train ran back to the station, the sides of the cars were lowered, and the work of placing the wounded in it commenced. Many of these men had been lying for hours at the railway station, where they had arrived earlier in the day. The more serious cases were laid in the trucks on their stretchers and covered over with blankets, but those only slightly injured were crowded, to the number of thirty or forty, in a single car. Not only was there no luxurious hospital train at Port Arthur, but there was not even a single third-class carriage. Generals, privates, foreigners, wounded and sick, all shared alike. Going from Chorashi to Dalny, you had to be content with the corner of a truck crowded with Japanese soldiers, or Chinamen engaged in business with the army. Coming back, the journey was more pleasant, for you could then ensconce yourself on the top of a pile of sacks of rice, and dig a hole amongst them to protect yourself from the cold.

Close to Chorashi station was an open piece of ground, and here all the stores arriving from Dalny were concentrated. The distance from Chorashi station to the besiegers' line was about five miles at the nearest

point; but if the supplies had to be conveyed to the 1st Division in the west, it was a distance of nearly twenty miles. Every morning hundreds of transport carts belonging to the divisional trains started from Chorashi station with supplies for the soldiers at the front. Each division had its supply depot at some suitable point, sheltered from the enemy's fire. Here were stored sufficient provisions to last for three days; and the supply was never allowed to fall below that amount, and was replenished by the daily arrival of the divisional transport laden with stores from Chorashi station. The hardest task of the transport officers was to feed the soldiers in their trenches at the foot of the Russian positions, because from the divisional depots to the front lines every horse and cart had to pass over ground exposed to the shell-fire of the Russian guns. This was especially the case with the 9th Division, whose lines of communication led down the Shell Strewn Road. The stores were sent to the front at night. The regimental transport carts and pack-horses were laden with supplies from the divisional depots in the afternoon, and under cover of darkness they wound their way in long trains to the divisional headquarters, and returned before morning. From the divisional headquarters the tinned meat and rice had to be carried forward by hand to the soldiers in the front trenches. It cannot be said to have been a really difficult task to feed an army in a stationary camp such as was General Nogi's before Port Arthur. Nevertheless, the organisation was perfect, and it is interesting to follow the fortunes of a sack of rice from the moment it left Japan to the time it entered the cooking-pot of a Japanese soldier. It would be placed by Japanese coolies on board a transport at

Nagasaki, Sasebo, or some other Japanese port. In forty-eight hours it would reach Dalny. In another twelve hours it would be unloaded by Japanese soldiers, and conveyed on Chinese carts to the railway station and placed in a truck. In three hours it arrived at Chorashi station, and there would be unloaded in ten minutes by Chinese coolies. At the reserve depot of supplies near the station our sack would probably have a respite of two or three days, until its turn came to be conveyed to the divisional depots. One morning it would be seized and thrown, in conjunction with half a dozen others, on to a little car drawn by a single horse, and led by a soldier to the divisional depot, over four or five miles of bumpy road. At the divisional depot it would have another respite of two days. On the third day it would again be seized, together with one of its companions, and the two placed on the back of a mule or pony, one balancing the other, for each sack weighed 50 lb. Under cover of darkness it would be led down the Shell Strewn Road to the divisional headquarters, and there immediately opened and served out to the troops. The machinery that caused all these things to happen was perfect, and never broke down. The gangs of Chinese coolies were handled with skill by Japanese overseers, and quickly learned their work, and above all the necessity of obedience, until they were almost as skilful as the soldiers of the regular army. The Japanese understand the Chinese far better than any European can ever hope to do. The Chinaman appreciates this, and either fears or respects the Japanese in consequence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LIFE AT THE FRONT.

The life led by foreigners attached to General Nogi's army was never lacking in interest, although at times it was apt to become a little monotonous, especially in the evenings when nothing particular was taking place. In the early stages of the siege I lived in a tent under the mountain of Hoshsan, remaining there until the beginning of October. At the end of September a series of violent wind-storms swept the country round the fortress: the temperature fell abnormally low, and the dust raised by the wind rendered life in a tent almost unbearable. I then applied to headquarters to be allowed to move into a Chinese village in the neighbourhood of the fortress. Quarters were found for my two companions, Mr Gerald Morgan and Mr Reginald Glossop, and myself in the village of Toboshin, within a stone's throw of General Nogi's headquarters. We were given one big room in the headman's house, and settled down to make our quarters as comfortable as possible. Here we remained until the beginning of November, when, on the departure of my two friends for the United States, I was left in sole possession of the room. A Chinese farmhouse consists of two rooms, with a hall in the centre. In the hall are two cauldrons

for cooking purposes. Along the whole length of one side of each room is a raised platform about two feet high. This is made of baked mud, and generally has matting laid on the top. The platform is hollow underneath, and is connected by a flue to the stoves in the hall. When you light a fire in the stove, the heat and smoke pass under the platform along the whole length of the room, and then out of a hole in the wall. On these platforms you sleep at night. There is a hole left in the platform, so that when the cold is very great you can light a fire underneath it, and have this heat in addition to that provided by the stoves. In November and December the cold before Port Arthur was very severe, and it was essential to light a fire underneath the platform before going to bed. The Chinese sleep in rows on this raised dais, and cover themselves over with blue quilts. I have seen as many as sixteen Chinese sleeping in one room in mid-winter: it was a case of the greater the number the greater the warmth. Our host and hostess were not at all disconcerted by having to give up one of their rooms for our use, and during the winter months frequently gave house-parties, their friends and relatives coming in to stop with them from the surrounding villages, and adding to the numbers in the already crowded room. During the cold weather my servant used to light a fire under the platform before I went to bed, and I slept on the top of this, covered by as many as fourteen blankets. The fire underneath the dais, which was made of cornstalks, would smoulder for hours, and was very pleasant for a certain length of time, but about one o'clock the mud became red-hot, and the heat would wake you up. The only thing to do then was to get up and rake out the fire, open the windows, and

walk about the village hunting the dogs, until the heat had subsided sufficiently to allow you to resume your slumbers. The dogs in the Chinese villages were a great nuisance. All through the night they sat and howled at the moon, until at times they drove you almost to despair.

Every Chinese house has a courtyard in front of it, and in this a mingled collection of donkeys, pigs, goats, chickens, and other animals roam about, frequently entering the house itself when so inclined. In this courtyard are stored great piles of cornstalks, which the Chinese use for fuel in the stoves. In another corner are the mealie cobs, the staple article of diet for the inhabitants of Liautung. The Chinese lived on mealies,—mealie porridge for breakfast, mealie bread for lunch, and more mealie bread for supper. In addition to the ordinary meals, supplementary ones were held whenever any member of the family felt hungry. The corn was ground an hour before the meal, between two stones, the upper one, propelled by a blindfolded donkey, revolving on the lower. This intelligent animal went round and round and round without being driven; he had done it so often that he knew exactly how long it took to grind sufficient corn for the family; when this was accomplished he would stop of his own accord. On very great occasions the carcass of some strange animal was brought in, and cooked by the women in the cauldron. All the food was prepared in a similar manner: the meat was chopped up first of all, and then thrown into the hot cauldron. It was quite impossible to roast or bake; everything had to be stewed. Some of the dishes gave forth the most revolting smells when being cooked. A *spécialité de la maison* in the family with whom I

dwelt was stewed eels. Three times a-week they had these eels for breakfast. The smell was so horrible that I was absolutely driven out of the house, and finally had to forbid the family ever to touch eels until after my departure. Another pleasant article of diet, of which the Chinese are very fond, was dog-flesh. The joints were hung round in the courtyard, to be preserved by the cold.

The distinctions among the Chinese are very peculiar. Next door to my house was a family who ate no mealies, but lived entirely on peas. In the winter they laid in a large supply, sufficient to last until the spring, which were brought over in sacks from Chefoo. I asked my Chinese cook why one family lived on peas and another on mealies, and he said that the one that lived on peas came from Shanghai, and the family with whom I lived were Manchus. The women were little better than slaves. They were absolutely at the beck and call of their lords and masters, and did all the work,—not only the household work, which was limited to cooking at all hours of the day and night, but also work in the fields. The head of the family sat around all day smoking a long pipe, and abusing the others in a high falsetto voice. His sons did a certain amount of work, and were employed, like most of the other Chinese, in various capacities by the Japanese army. The carts drawn by mules, which every Chinese family possessed, were of great value to their owners during the siege, and were hired for as much as seven yen, or fourteen shillings, per day.

No European ever really understands the Chinese. It is useless to treat them like other people. If your servant fails to call you at a prearranged hour, or lest

your fire go out, or cooks your dinner badly, you will get just as much satisfaction out of abusing him for his delinquencies as out of running your head against a stone wall. If you use strong language to him in the presence of others, he simply despises you; yet he feels personally humiliated by it, because if a Chinaman is abused before other Chinamen he at once loses caste, and losing caste is the greatest misfortune that can overtake one of these strange people. He despises you, just as he would despise himself if he said anything which caused one of his countrymen to lose caste. The keynote of the Chinese character is intense personal pride,—a sort of pride that Europeans can hardly understand. If you desire to reprimand your servant for his faults and errors, you must take him quietly aside and talk to him in a calm and logical manner. You must point out the inconvenience that has arisen from his action, and the serious consequences which may result from it. If you do this in a satisfactory manner your Chinaman will see that he has made a fool of himself, and making a fool of himself means a further loss of caste; only with this difference, he has not lost caste by the act of another, he has merely lost it in his own imagination by the stupid way in which he has behaved.

Chinamen possess many admirable qualities; but cleanliness is certainly not their strong point, and the state of filth in which they keep their farms and dwellings is something indescribable. As their fuel consists of cornstalks, an immense amount of smoke is produced when fires are lighted. The smoke is supposed to find its way out of the room through a hole in the wall under the raised platform; but a great deal of it comes up through the holes in the

mud platform and fills the room. The walls and ceilings are never cleaned from one year's end to another, and the soot settles over everything, sometimes to a depth of several inches. Their dirty habits alone prevented my stay in a Chinese farm from being exactly a pleasant memory, for my host and hostess and their family were kindliness itself. They were always willing to assist my servants in any manner, to attend to my horses, and to fetch water from the well some distance away. In return for these little acts I presented the younger members of the community from time to time with tins of condensed milk and jam, which were immensely appreciated. The family gathered in a circle round a pot of jam, dipping their fingers into it and then sucking them, until the pot was cleaned out. The Chinese are a very orderly people; but to say that they are law-abiding is not quite accurate, because they do without any law at all. In what other country in the world would you find three million people—the number of Chinese scattered over the Liautung peninsula—dwelling peaceably in their villages, and carrying on their ordinary occupations, in the midst of a war? The machinery of their own government, such as it is, ceased to work when the Japanese invaded Liautung, and so the Chinese were left without any government at all. Although the Japanese had proclaimed martial law in the country, they had far too much on their hands to bother themselves about looking after the Chinese, and yet perfect peace reigned in the villages. Trade was carried on as usual, and the ordinary business of life transacted. What would be the condition of a district in the United States, or England, or on the Continent, if the country were in the hands

of an invader, the civil police removed, martial law established without an executive, and the whole machinery of government completely broken down?

Foreign correspondents with General Nogi's army were obliged to feed themselves, and this was not a particularly easy task. The most satisfactory way was to make your Chinese servant your caterer, give him a certain amount of money, and let him hunt the surrounding villages for goat's flesh or fish. The army headquarters provided rice, and this was our staple article of diet. Every day two trains left for Dalny from Chorashi station, conveying back the wounded and sick to the base hospitals. If you desired to visit Dalny you were obliged to obtain a pass from army headquarters, which stated the number of days for which leave was granted. On reaching Dalny you had to report at the Staff Office, and quarters would be found for you in one of the houses. There were many stores open in the town, and from these you could purchase large quantities of tinned food, which the Japanese conveyed up to Port Arthur by train. It was necessary to lay in a store sufficient to last for three or four weeks, since you could never tell when a suitable opportunity would arise for another visit. About the middle of the siege there was a great scarcity of stores in Dalny, as the Japanese navy was seizing all the Chinese junks sent over from Chefoo laden with provisions, and the Chinamen would not take the risk of fitting out a ship which was liable to be confiscated. The precaution no doubt was necessary, because the Russians in Chefoo were employing junks to go to Port Arthur and run the blockade; and as Dalny and Port Arthur are only twenty-five miles apart, it was hard

to discriminate between a junk bent on legitimate business and one endeavouring to run the blockade. These visits to Dalny were an agreeable relaxation after weeks before the fortress. There was a Chinese restaurant in the town which had an excellent cook who had once been a *chef* on a P. and O. boat, and this man knew exactly what Europeans required. The Nippon Yusena Keisha, the Japan Steamship Company, whose boats run to London and Seattle in time of peace, were obliged to discontinue their service on the outbreak of war. The boats were taken over by the Japanese Government for use in the transport service, and plied regularly between Dalny and Japan. One of these boats could always be found alongside the quay at Dalny, and it became a regular custom to visit the captains on board these vessels. They were for the most part Englishmen, and were always willing to do anything they could for their fellow-countrymen with General Nogi's army. They invited you to spend the night in one of their spotlessly clean cabins, and the joy of finding yourself in a hot bath and then lying between real sheets seemed almost too good to be true. The Japanese authorities gave us permission to stop on these boats when we visited Dalny, which thus obviated the discomfort of a Chinese hotel. Those who enjoyed his hospitality will never forget the kindness of Captain Bainbridge of the *Inaba Maru*, or the courtesies of Captain de Lande and Captain Peterson.

The foreign military attachés of the 3rd Army were constantly having narrow escapes from disaster. They were obliged to ride about in a great cavalcade, accompanied by Japanese officers, and whenever they visited the front line they were liable to attract

the attention of the Russian gunners, who seldom had so favourable a mark to aim at. In October the Spanish attaché was wounded while visiting Banrhusan East. The Russians fired a shell, which burst on the top of a trench and dislodged a large piece of rock, which fell on the leg of Colonel Heirara, breaking one of the bones. On November 19 Captain Sir Alexander Bannerman, R.E., Captain Yate, of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, and Lieutenant Wolfskeel, the German military attaché, had a miraculous escape from death. They went to visit Fort Nirusan, and were accompanied by Lieutenant Hori, General Oshima's aide-de-camp, and a Lieutenant Shibeshima, a young Japanese officer attached to their staff. The party spent the morning examining the engineering works in progress against the fort, and later on sat down in a trench on the top of the screen of Nirusan to rest, when the Russians suddenly commenced to shell the Japanese lines. The group were sitting round in a circle in the trench, so close to one another that they were practically touching, when a Russian shell, fired at random from a 4·7 gun, suddenly landed right in their midst. It burst before they had time to stir, and all were thrown forward in a heap by the force of the explosion. They picked themselves up from the bottom of the trench, and commenced to move away, laughing at their narrow escape, when they discovered that one of their number was missing. Returning to the spot, they found Shibeshima lying dead. The shell had burst into many bits, and the base of it passed right through the unfortunate young man's body. A splinter hit Lieutenant Hori in the ear, and caused a slight wound. Another splinter struck

Sir Alexander Bannerman just beneath the eye, but did no harm. It was a strange coincidence that these five officers, three of whom were Europeans and two Japanese, should have been sitting in a circle, and that one Japanese should have been killed and the other wounded, while the three attachés escaped unscathed.

On November 19 I rode over to the west, and visited the headquarters of the 1st Division, in order to climb Namakoyama, which had been captured in September. The 1st Regiment, under Colonel Teruda, was encamped on the mountain. This officer was an old veteran who had been in no less than fifty-seven engagements in the course of his career. He told me he had once fought in chain armour and carried a battle-axe. This is a remarkable example of the changes that have come over Japan during the last thirty years. In the history of most countries ten centuries separate the days of chain armour and battle-axes from those of modern weapons and uniforms. Japan has been the exception to the rule. It has only taken her thirty years to make the transformation. Colonel Teruda was a charming old gentleman, and personally conducted me over the mountain on which his regiment was encamped. From the summit of Namakoyama a good view was obtained of the interior of Port Arthur. The back of the eastern section of the fortifications was exposed to full view. The old town and part of the new town were plainly visible, and also the entrance to the harbour; but a fold in the land close to the water's edge hid the battleships anchored there from observation, and afforded them a respite from destruction until 203 Metre Hill could be captured. The crest of Nama-

koyama bore many evidences of the fight that had been waged for its possession. The two 6-inch guns which the Russians had mounted in concrete emplacements had been overturned by the shell-fire. The trenches in which the Russian infantry had made their final stand ran round the crest, and in several places 37-millimetre guns were mounted, a large quantity of shells for them being stored close by. These had been left on the mountain when the Russians evacuated it, and the muzzles had now been turned round, and faced the Russian position on 203 Metre Hill and Akasakayama. These 37-millimetre guns are a species of single-fire pom-pom, and have a very demoralising effect when trained on infantry in attack. To the south-east of Namakoyama, and separated from it by a valley, was Akasakayama, a continuation of 203 Metre Hill, and, like that position, still in the hands of the Russians. The soldiers of the two armies sniped at one another across this valley, which rendered the crest of Namakoyama very dangerous. When we had inspected the mountain, Colonel Teruda said he would take me round to the headquarters of the commander of the 1st Brigade and introduce me to Major-General Baba, who had succeeded Major-General Yamamoto when that officer was killed. On our way to Namakoyama we passed down some trenches which were very much exposed to the fire of the Russians on Akasakayama, and at one point Colonel Teruda stopped and pointed out to me the spot where Yamamoto had been killed. I had always thought up to this time that the General had been killed during the attack on Namakoyama, but that was not correct. He was walking down this trench three days after the engagement, when the Russians fired a volley at him and his staff.

A bullet passed right through Yamamoto, who fell dead on the spot.

The Japanese are very punctilious about always having officers of proper rank to command the various divisions of the army. That is to say, a division will always be commanded by a lieutenant-general, and never by a major-general; likewise a brigade will always be commanded by a major-general, and never by a colonel. On the death of Yamamoto, Major-General Baba, the next officer on the list for promotion, was brought down from Manchuria to assume command of the 1st Brigade. This officer had distinguished himself at the battle of Liaoyang, and he was one of the very few who were present at that battle and also at the fall of Port Arthur. This is a good example of the case in point, because it would have been thought that some colonel in the army before Port Arthur, a man who had been present during the siege and who knew the ground, would have been promoted to the command of the 1st Brigade. Colonel Teruda pointed out to me the trenches which the Japanese were busily constructing at the foot of 203 Metre Hill, and he said he anticipated an attack would be made on that mountain at no distant date. Little did the gallant Colonel realise that in less than ten days his adjutant and the majority of his officers would be killed on that fatal mountain, and he himself so seriously wounded that for a time his life was despaired of.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE EVE OF GREAT EVENTS.

It is now time to relate the events leading up to the third series of attacks on the eastern section of the fortifications of Port Arthur. After the lesson learnt on October 30, it was considered improbable that any further attempt would be made to take the forts by assault, until the escarpments had been mined and blown up. From the common talk of the army at that period, and especially from a conversation attributed to Nogi's A.D.C., it was inferred that the General was strongly in favour of making no further assaults until the engineering operations had been brought to a point where success in attack became possible. I consider this must have been the case, for it seems almost incredible that the generals in command before Port Arthur would again have called upon their men to advance against these forts which had so often defied capture. Whatever may have been the opinions held by General Nogi and his Divisional Commanders, they were overruled by the authorities in Tokio, and by the General Staff of the Manchurian armies. It was the bogey of the Baltic Fleet, and that alone, which led to the futile loss of life on November 26. The military and naval authorities of Japan were

nervous. They could not forget that the Russian admiral was bringing out to the Far East a squadron of seven battleships and many other vessels. Whatever views might be held on the efficiency of this armada, it was obvious that Japan's position would be serious, supposing Rodjestvensky's squadron was able to unite for just a few hours with the five damaged ironclads in Port Arthur. Could Togo hope, with his four battleships and his armoured cruisers, to successfully face the combined Russian fleet? The risk was thought too great, and General Nogi was ordered to make another attempt to capture the fortress and to destroy the warships, without waiting for the engineering operations to be brought to a more advanced stage.

Two of the most distinguished officers of the General Staff of the Manchurian armies, Generals Kodama and Fukashima, came down from the north and held consultations with General Nogi on the steps that should be taken to achieve the end in view. The result of the meeting of the three generals was the decision to deliver an attack on the four main forts in the east—viz., Shojusan, Nirusan, North Keikwansan, and Higashi Keikwansan.

The new plan of operations was to be carried out on a grand combined scale hitherto unattempted, for it was not to be confined solely to the eastern section of the fortifications. 203 Metre Hill was to be included in the general scheme for the second time in the siege. Since September 21, when the 1st Division had been driven with great slaughter off the mountain, the Japanese had made no active move against 203 Metre Hill; but they had been busily engaged in sapping up to the foot of it in

case it became necessary to deliver another attack. Coming events cast their shadows before, and the Japanese seemed to anticipate some disaster, or unprecedented carnage, should they attempt to carry the mountain by assault.

The attack on Shojusan, Nirusan, North Keikwansan, and Higashi Keikwansan, offered two results if it were successful. By the light of subsequent events, it would have brought about the fall of Port Arthur; and by causing the capitulation of the fortress, the Russian squadron would be forced to put to sea, or be sunk at its anchorage, or have to be surrendered, which latter alternative was very unlikely.

The capture of 203 Metre Hill was to be postponed until the result of the fighting in the east became known, for success in the west did not offer such decisive results as the fall of the eastern line of forts. If 203 Metre Hill changed hands it would not lead to the fall of the fortress; for the Metre Range, of which it forms the southern extremity, is outside the true perimeter of defence. But its capture would, as far as was known, bring about the main result the Japanese had in view at this time—the destruction of the Russian squadron.

It is doubtful if the Japanese appreciated at the commencement of the siege the secret which 203 Metre Hill had so long concealed—namely, the splendid view from its summit. This was all the more surprising, as they were for some considerable time in possession of Port Arthur, and should have been better informed about the geographical features of the country. The real importance of 203 Metre Hill was apparently only appreciated after the occupation of Namakoyama. The view from Namakoyama is excellent, yet unsatisfying;

the back of the eastern section of the fortification is laid open to view; the old town of Port Arthur and part of the harbour are plainly visible. But some hills near the edge of the water provided a screen for the warships at anchor; and this had just saved the Russian fleet after the capture of Namakoyama. It was fairly obvious, however, that a hill such as 203, farther to the south-east, must command a perfect view of the entire harbour, and of any vessels in it. If the assault on the eastern section of the forts failed, the capture of Port Arthur would have to be indefinitely postponed; but in that case an attempt was to be made to carry the dread 203 Metre Hill. If the hill was taken, an observation station could be speedily erected on the summit, and connected by telephone to the batteries of 28-centimetre howitzers ranged round the fortress. The howitzers could be laid by officers on duty in the observation station. By this means the position of the Russian fleet would soon be rendered untenable.

No pains were spared to make the coming attack a success; the preparations were of the most elaborate character, and left nothing to chance. Large quantities of ammunition for the 28-centimetre guns were brought up to the front, so that the bombardment of the Russian positions might last for several days. There would be no fear of running short of ammunition, as unfortunately happened after the three days' bombardment preceding the assault on October 30. It was felt important to bring up a fresh division of soldiers to reinforce the battered veterans who had been vegetating in front of the fortress for nearly four months. Although the attack of October 30 had been conducted with the same spirit as the reckless assaults in August,

the men were showing signs of staleness. This was not to be wondered at, as the soldiers were bitterly disappointed at the poor results of their labours, self-sacrifice, and heroism. The gaps in the ranks had been filled by reservists or recruits. Most of the officers had been killed or wounded, and the new-comers were commanded by boys, some of whom had hardly passed their course in the Military College. The same spirit of enthusiasm for their Emperor and country animated the latest arrivals; but the old soldiers, who had formed part of the regular army which left the shores of Japan at the commencement of hostilities, could not fail to draw unfavourable comparisons between the highly-trained and well-known leaders who were dead, and the mere striplings whom force of circumstances had placed over them.

On no occasion are troops, even the bravest, more likely to be seized with an attack of nerves than after they have been kept for month after month in parallels, facing the enemy at a distance of only a few yards. The hills, forts, and entrenchments daily become more formidable to the imagination of the soldiers, ever beset with the knowledge that sooner or later they will be called upon to attack the positions. The soldiers of General Nogi's original army had already made two or three unsuccessful attacks on many of the positions, and if any proof were needed of the superlative qualities of the Japanese troops, it is the fact that the generals could rely on the same men to advance again and again.

One of the secrets of the success of the Germans in the war of 1870 was the skilful manner in which the generals always managed to place fresh troops in the firing line. If a division or brigade or regiment had

once received a severe mauling at the hands of the French, they were kept back afterwards as far as possible, and their place taken by soldiers who had not tasted of the *furia francesca*. The advantage of having fresh blood to throw into the scale at the critical moment, to clear up arrears, was not lost on the Japanese. General Nogi's army was therefore reinforced early in November by the arrival of the 7th Division from Japan, and also by one brigade of the 8th. The 7th Division, a splendid body of troops, bore a high reputation for its fighting qualities, and was recruited from the Hokkaido district of Japan. The Division was composed of the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th Regiments, under the command of Lieut.-General Osaka, whose brigadiers were Generals Saito and Yoshida. Three regiments were sent to assist the 1st Division in their operations against 203 Metre Hill, but one regiment, the 25th, was separated from the others, and sent to assist the 2nd Regiment in attacking Shojusan. The brigade of the 8th Division was sent to the aid of Oshima's Division, the 9th.

Returning to my camp from the 9th Division, one night early in November, I suddenly stumbled upon the new troops marching down the Shell Strewn Road to the front. I noticed the extreme eagerness and martial bearing of the men, as one after another the battalions, led by their mounted officers, swung by in the darkness and disappeared, swallowed up in the blackness of the night. All were anxious to reach the fighting line. How little did those thousands of men realise the fate in store for them, or imagine that the majority were treading that fatal road for the first and last time! In less than a week more than half of them lay dead about the escarpments of the forts

towards which they were hurrying. Their comrades of the 26th, 27th, and 28th Regiments, from whom they had parted a few hours earlier at Chorashi Station, and who were now on their way to the west, were destined to meet with a similar fate on the bloody slopes of 203 Metre Hill. Numbers of men who composed the 7th Division when it left Japan, were destined never to fraternise again. Their bones lie scattered about Nirusan, Shojusan, North Keikwansan, and 203 Metre Hill. Of all the incidents of the siege, I think there is none more tragic than the almost total destruction of the 7th Division, within less than a week of its arrival at the front. General Osaka, its commander, was fated to see some 6000 of his men killed or wounded on the first occasion they went into action.

As to the feeling throughout the army at this period, I do not think there was very much confidence among the men who had been present since the beginning; but as this assault was to be made by entirely fresh troops, that did not matter so much. "All my life," said Wellington, "I have been endeavouring to find out what is on the other side of the hill." For the last four months the Japanese army before Port Arthur had been trying to solve the same problem. Many gallant officers and men had gained the other side of the hill, and had never returned. After each assault a few men had come back from the other side of the hill, with information that led to another assault, in order to verify, and if possible to profit by, their statements. The business of finding out what lay on the other side of the hill was a dangerous and costly one, and many asked themselves the question, Is it worth the cost? Why not sit down and wait until the people on the other side of the hill come out to find what

you have got to eat on your side? That seemed to the majority of the soldiers the obvious course to adopt; for there still remained many hills in Manchuria to yield their secrets before the war ended, and men are apt to become tired of the pastime if you ask them to climb over the same mountain too often.

On November 23 a preliminary operation was carried out, to pave the way for the coming assault on the fort on Higashi Keikwansan. It will be remembered that one of the reasons for the failure of the attack on that position on October 30 was the trench, half-way up the slope of the hill, which the Japanese had to capture before any further advance could be attempted. I have already stated how the Japanese engineers had sapped close up to the obstacle. The commander of the 11th Division, General Tsuchiya, determined to attack the trench, and wrest it from the enemy before the day of the general assault. If the Japanese were successful, they could run their parallels up the slope of the hill, close to the foot of the fort, as had been done elsewhere. The hour fixed for the assault was 5.30 P.M., and no great bombardment, which would at once place the Russians on their guard, was to usher in the proceedings. The winter nights were closing in rapidly; at 5.30 it would be almost dark, and the soldiers of the 12th Regiment stood a fair chance of surprising their stubborn opponents. In order to watch the operation I rode down to the foot of Taikosan, the headquarters of the 11th Division, where I met a small party of foreign attachés, also bent on the same errand. As the attack was not timed to take place until 5.30, there was nothing particular to do; so, accompanied by some Japanese officers, we climbed Taikosan, and had a look at the

Russian fortifications. General Tsuchiya had a bomb-proof shelter erected on a lower spur of Taikosan, directly facing Higashi Keikwansan; and when I descended the mountain at 5 o'clock, the General and his staff were just making their way to this observation station. Tsuchiya very kindly invited me to come inside out of the cold. The interior of this model bomb-proof was fitted up in a very luxurious and comfortable manner, and as the snow was thick on the ground any shelter was peculiarly agreeable. Operations of war, even of the severest character, can be rendered comfortable with a little foresight. A trench had been cut in the side of the hill, and roofed in with logs of wood, on the top of which sand-bags were piled, thus rendering it almost safe from shell fire. Inside, a ledge had been cut for spectators to sit down on, and when sitting the eye came just opposite the loopholes left for observation purposes. On the ledge red blankets and waterproof sheets were laid, to form cushions. At one end was a fire, casting a grateful warmth through the interior. Sitting on this soft bench, every pair of eyes riveted on a loop-hole, were General Tsuchiya, the officers of his staff, two military attachés, and myself. Here we waited for a considerable time, as the minutes passed, and the hands of the Chief of Staff's watch slowly approached 5.30.

To our front, about a thousand yards away, was Higashi Keikwansan, partly covered with snow. A raised bank, about half-way up, marked the position of the Russian trench which was to be attacked; and thirty yards farther down another raised bank showed where the Japanese infantry were waiting the signal to advance. There was not a sign of life on any of

the forts, or in the Japanese lines. Hardly a gun had been fired throughout the entire afternoon, and a deathlike stillness, such as you only have when the ground is covered with snow, reigned everywhere. I could not help contrasting the comfort I was enjoying with the lot of the thousands of soldiers in the trenches at the foot of the Russian positions, shivering with cold, and waiting to sacrifice their lives when called upon. I always experienced an uncomfortable, if not guilty, feeling while watching the attacks on Port Arthur: a kind-hearted Roman emperor must have had the same sensation when gazing from his box on a gladiatorial show. Why should one man have the privilege of watching thousands of others struggle for life or death without sharing their dangers? After the battle I could always return to the comparative comfort of a house or tent, there to find a faithful Chinese cook with dinner already prepared, while the men who had done all the work, and therefore deserved the reward, must perforce remain in their entrenchments, surrounded by their dead and wounded comrades, shivering with cold, and suffering the pangs of hunger. It certainly did not seem fair; but such things must always be.

The light had faded so rapidly that at 5.30 it was quite impossible to see what was happening. Higashi Keikwansan was merely a blurred mass, on which nothing could be distinguished. The attack commenced in a manner worthy of the occasion. Punctually at 5.30 all the guns in the neighbourhood of the 11th Division, including 28-centimetre howitzers, field howitzers, and field guns, opened up a bombardment. Every gun was fired at the same moment, as if controlled by a single hand. The first shells were aimed

at the trench which was to be assaulted, but after one round the aim of the gunners was directed elsewhere, because the Japanese infantry were to advance immediately, and it would have been impossible to distinguish them from the Russians in the gathering darkness. On the hills in the neighbourhood of Higashi Keikwansan bursts of flame suddenly broke forth, marking the spot where the Japanese shells had fallen. The Russian gunners, aroused for the first time during the day from their lethargy, replied to this fire, and shells soon began to burst in the neighbourhood of the 11th Division. The trench on Higashi Keikwansan was now a blaze of many-coloured lights, for the infantry were engaged in their ghastly work, and were meeting with a determined resistance from the Russians. The Russian gunners plied the Japanese with shrapnel, and the shells, bursting in the darkness, lent a very beautiful effect. During daylight, if you watch shrapnel, you only see a little cloud of white smoke which suddenly makes its appearance up against the blue sky. The cloud is followed by a peculiar twang, as the shell bursts, and the bullets disperse in a circle. At night the cloud of white smoke is invisible, but a bright burst of flame in mid air takes its place. The Russians, desirous of ascertaining if the Japanese had some other plan in view, commenced to burst their beautiful star-shells all over the Suishien valley. Everything, however, yielded in magnificence to the effect produced by the variety of explosives employed on Higashi Keikwansan. Along the front of the trenches hundreds of rifles were flashing in the darkness. Every now and then bigger and brighter flashes showed where a hand grenade had been thrown, while blue and red lights were also burnt. The picture was weird and effective; the noise

so great that it seemed impossible for any one to survive the inferno. On account of the darkness it was difficult to tell what was happening, but the telephone every other minute conveyed information to General Tsuchiya, who sat calmly receiving the messages as they were handed in by an orderly. The contents were not communicated to a stranger.

At 6 o'clock, half an hour after the commencement of the bombardment, a message came along the wire stating that the 12th Regiment was safely in possession of the front of the trench, and that those Russians who were not killed had retreated towards the east. This announcement was communicated to all present, and there was great rejoicing at the successful termination of the attack. General Tsuchiya was very cheerful, and with good reason, for this dread trench had been responsible for so much loss of life that its capture seemed an earnest of future success. The General sent to his headquarters for several bottles of champagne, which were quickly opened, and every one present drank to the health of the troops who had made the attack, and to the success of the future operations. We then left the bomb-proof, and wound our way with the utmost difficulty down the steep slopes of Taikosan towards the headquarters of the 11th Division, but not without frequent falls and slides, for the surface of the mountain was covered with ice and snow. The hospitable officers of the 11th Division refused to allow the two attachés and myself to leave for home without first dining with them. On our way back in the darkness an ominous spluttering of rifle-fire commenced from Higashi Keikwansan; but so contented was every one with the success of the day that little notice was taken of this at the time, and we all parted in the most cheerful mood.

Throughout the night of the 23rd there was heavy firing along the front of the 11th Division, and on the morning of the 24th I learnt that the Japanese had been once more driven out of the captured work. During the night the Russians, coming up the trench from both east and west, made a determined counter-attack on the Japanese infantry, who were finally crushed between these two fires and forced back to the shelter of their own lines. Thus we had celebrated the triumph of the Japanese arms somewhat prematurely on the previous night. This repulse did not improve the chances of the coming great attack on the eastern forts, or rouse the enthusiasm of the army for the attempt. Ever since the big howitzers had been placed in position round the fortress, the Russian positions had been systematically and almost daily bombarded. It was considered unnecessary to usher in the assault on November 26 with several days of continual bombardment, such as had preceded that of October 30. It was probably felt that if the damage done throughout the previous three weeks was not sufficient to shake the Russian defence, three extra days would not bring about what weeks had failed to accomplish.

On the 25th all the Japanese siege-guns commenced to bombard Shojusan, Nirusan, and Higashi Keikwan-san in a more vigorous manner. Even on the night of the 25th it had not been announced that an assault would be made on the 26th, and it was not until that very morning that I was informed, by the arrival of a messenger from headquarters, that at 1 o'clock, provided General Nogi was satisfied with the conditions, the signal would be given for the infantry to advance.

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A RUSSIAN WORK CAPTURED BY THE JAPANESE AND RECAPTURED BY THE RUSSIANS.

CHAPTER XX.

THE ASSAULT OF NOVEMBER 26TH.

On the morning of the 26th I rode down to the headquarters of the 9th Division; close to which, from a bomb-proof shelter, I watched all these great attacks on the eastern section of the line. On the way to the front, a distance of about two miles from the village of Toboshin, I witnessed another of those superb bombardments which always ushered in an assault on the forts. In fury and power this bombardment exceeded any that had preceded it. There were more of the 28-centimetre guns in action than in October; and forts Nirusan and Shojusan had also to be bombarded, as well as the Keikwansan group. At 10 A.M. the Japanese artillery opened fire for the last time on the shapeless heaps of sand, stones, charred timber, and rubbish to which the forts had, to outward appearance, been reduced by constant bombardment. The gunners were as confident as they had been on the morning of October 30. They declared they had completely smashed up the enemy's fortifications. "When the infantry go forward to the attack, they will find no one left alive in the entrenchments." Even the artillery officers must have become a little sceptical at this stage of the siege as to the damage inflicted

by artillery-fire. So far, fortune had been fickle to the gunners; and most of us believed that the infantry alone could command her favours.

The Russians apparently realised, by the very fury of the Japanese bombardment, that a decisive moment had arrived. They determined to make the most of the opportunity, which might be their last, and opened a furious cannonade in reply to the Japanese guns. It was almost impossible to approach the neighbourhood of the Japanese batteries, for Russian shells of every calibre were bursting around in hundreds, ploughing up the ground, sending earth, sand, stones, rock, and pieces of iron, in all directions, and occasionally hitting one of the guns. To the black smoke of the Russian shells was added the white smoke of the 28-centimetre guns, which rose in an enormous cloud, like a balloon, after each discharge. The effect was curious: close to the ground everything was hidden by a black pall, and from the midst of this, every minute the white balloon would ascend, followed by a deafening roar, as a howitzer was fired. Frequently it would be impossible to catch a glimpse of the gunners or the guns, so severe was the bombardment. If for a moment a breeze lifted the pall and disclosed the batteries to view, the Japanese gunners would be seen, working for dear life—many with their coats off and sleeves rolled up, in spite of the snow on the ground, and taking absolutely no notice of the iron storm which every moment seemed fated to overwhelm them.

A railway bridge on the Shell Strewn Road, one of the most popular halting-places on that dangerous passage to the 9th Division, afforded me temporary shelter. The railway here runs alongside the road,

and across the road, 100 yards from the bridge, is the hill named by the Japanese, Danjanshi. Behind this hill the Japanese had two 28-centimetre guns. The Russians were concentrating their fire on these guns, and were planting so many shells on the road at this point that it would have been courting destruction to pass down it. Under the arch of the bridge I found a number of Japanese officers, soldiers, and orderlies, also waiting for some lull in the firing before attempting to proceed. Here we remained for over three-quarters of an hour watching the battery being pounded 100 yards away, and thanking Providence for the substantial railway arch over our heads. Our numbers swelled considerably during this period, as fresh men and officers rode up. Some gunners belonging to the battery were also under the bridge, and as they were wanted at the guns they were obliged to cross the road. These men were wheeling three hand-carts, on which they conveyed provisions to their comrades. They had only 100 yards to traverse,—simply to cross over and rush for the shelter of the hill behind which their battery was placed. Amid the jeers and good-natured chaff of their comrades the first cart started on its dangerous errand. The men moved with dignity for a few yards, and then, as they heard the whistle of a shell, rushed across the remainder of the road. One shell burst just behind them, on the spot they had vacated a second before, but they reached cover safely. The other hand-carts followed in turn, and all succeeded in making the passage, by timing judiciously the bursting of the Russian shells until they knew how long an interval occurred between each shot. There was considerable snow on the ground, and whenever a shell burst it was scattered

in all directions, leaving a great black patch on the white surface.

I was beginning to despair of ever reaching the 9th Division on account of the shell-fire, and many of the Japanese began to measure the distance with their eye, which could only forebode a determination to make the rush, when suddenly the Russian artillery commenced to slacken. The Japanese gunners had for some time turned their attention more to the Russian batteries than to the trenches which were to be assaulted, and their concentrated fire was gradually beginning to tell on the enemy, many of whose guns were silenced. This gave us the opportunity to leave cover and pass down the road to the shelter of the ridge, where the headquarters of the 9th Division was situated. This ridge is not a range of hills, but rather a sudden rise in the Suishien valley, which is then continued at almost the same level up to the foot of the hills on which the Russian forts were constructed. During the advance early in August the Japanese had dug some trenches just at the top of the ridge, and these were now deserted. My friend, Mr Gerald Morgan, and myself had on that occasion appropriated one of these, about 600 yards from the North Keikwansan Fort; and from this point we watched all the great attacks on the eastern forts. A more perfect place could not have been found, for at this short distance every man, gun, and bayonet was visible, even to the naked eye, and with powerful glasses every one appeared life-size. Little gills led up from the camp of the 9th Division to the top of the higher level, and at the end of one of these our shelter was situated. It was very necessary to be safely in position before the assaults began, otherwise you were liable to catch

the bullets fired from the Russian marksmen at the Japanese infantry, for these would skim over the crest of the ridge down the little gills. After every fight one could pick up thousands of these bullets.

Owing to the great delay on the Shell Strewn Road, I did not reach my shelter until about 12.30, half an hour before the assault. Mr Gerald Morgan had, unfortunately, been obliged to return to the United States; so on this occasion I was alone. My bomb-proof shelter had been some five feet high, and possessed a roof made of beams and sand-bags; but to my infinite chagrin, on arriving there on the 26th, I found that a Russian shell had taken off the roof and reduced the height of the trench by two feet. I was not, however, destined to be alone, for on entering the trench I found a Buddhist priest and a Japanese non-commissioned officer, who had also chosen this spot from which to view the attack. We soon made friends, and managed to carry on a conversation with the aid of a few words of Japanese, English, and French, various signs, some ham sandwiches, a bottle of claret, and many cigarettes. The priest was an excellent fellow: he should have been down among the hospitals to administer the last rites to the dying as they were carried in from the advanced trenches; but having become tired of this occupation, and possessing all the fighting instincts of his race, he had taken a day off to watch the great attack. When the fighting was at its height he became so enthusiastic that he stood up above the trench, exposed to full view, and waved a red-coloured scarf. After the fight was over he insisted upon my returning to his quarters, where he provided me with an excellent dinner. I am afraid many hundreds of Japanese spirits passed into oblivion,

unattended, on the afternoon of the 26th. At 8 o'clock at night my priestly friend recalled himself to his duty, and donning his gaudy robes, rushed off to the nearest hospital.

Of all forms of excitement, I think there is none that can approach that of waiting for the signal to be given for troops to advance to the attack. Especially was this the case on the afternoon of November 26. So much was at stake, and so many thousands of lives hung in the balance, that whole days were crowded into minutes, in the anxious imagination of those who were onlookers at such a scene. From my position I could see the hundreds of soldiers massed in the advanced trenches at the foot of Higashi Keikwan-san. The Japanese were determined to make another attempt to take that fatal position, from which they had been driven on October 30, and again on November 23. The Japanese soldiers were literally packed like sardines in the tunnel leading to the ditch and counterscarp galleries of North Keikwansan Fort. The trenches near this fort were crammed with sharp-shooters, whose duty it would be to keep down the fire of the Russians as the Japanese infantry attempted to scale the escarpment. Some of the soldiers in the trench leading to the tunnel were carrying long bamboo scaling-ladders, for these would be necessary if the fort was to be taken. In the trenches close to Nirusan the same conditions existed, and although Shojusan was hidden from my view, a similar sight would have met the eye on that work also. Along the front of the Russian forts, from Higashi Keikwansan in the east to Shojusan farther to the west, all was life and anima-tion. Whole battalions of brave men were living their last hour, before yielding up their spirits to the service

of their country. The Japanese shells were bursting in countless numbers, like the spray of Atlantic rollers, over the Russian forts, and at times nothing could be seen but the immense pall of black and white smoke. It was impossible not to think of the Russians, the brave men in front, crouching behind the ruined walls of stone and earth, sheltering themselves from this iron storm by hiding in holes dug deep into the ground, and eagerly counting the seconds which they knew must elapse before the hostile infantry were upon them. At a quarter to one 500 guns were bombarding the Russian forts, and 50,000 men were waiting the signal to spring at the enemy's throat. Not a soldier would stir until the signal was given. When the moment came, all the 500 guns would suddenly cease fire, and every one of those 50,000 men, if ordered, would advance simultaneously to the attack.

Let us glance for a moment at the machinery which controls and guides every movement of these 500 guns and 50,000 men. The power-house stands on a hill some two and a half miles away from the centre of the Russian chain of forts. Just beneath the sky-line a little group of officers is seen: they have left their horses at the bottom of the hill, and climbed the 600 feet to the summit. One of them may be distinguished from the others by his dress. He wears a khaki overcoat lined with fur, which, when thrown open, displays a short black tunic with lapels. His legs are encased in white leather breeches and high French boots, halfway up the thigh like a cavalier's. On his head is a peaked cap with a red band round it. The face of this man is stern, but kindly. His head and hair are now freely tinged with grey, the result of three months' hard work and anxiety. This is General Nogi.

He gazes across the expanse of hill and open plain to the smoking forts and crowded trenches beneath them. Close to his general stands Ijichi, who wears glasses, and looks more like a professor than a soldier. Leaning up against a trench, he is gazing through field-glasses placed on a stand, and as something catches his fancy he occasionally utters a few words to Nogi. Near by are a group of shabbily-dressed officers: some look through glasses, others examine maps, while others talk amongst themselves. Within call are several orderlies; one of them has a spring attachment on his head, which keeps the receiver of a telephone at his ear. He holds the mouthpiece in his hand, and occasionally talks down it as an officer dictates a message. This little group of officers is the engine which drives this complicated and wonderful machine of war. In his hand, absolutely at his disposal, General Nogi holds the lives and destinies of 50,000 human beings. Indirectly also he controls the destinies of those other thousands, crouching amidst the ruins of the forts, awaiting the attack. One word will let loose a mighty torrent on the rocks behind which those Russians are crowded. One word will cause 500 guns to fire or to cease firing. One word from this middle-aged courtly Daimio may affect the history of the whole world. What a power for one man to wield, and what a responsibility! How all other power pales into insignificance before the grasp on destiny held by one man at such a moment! Orators who sway great assemblies, statesmen who construct, ministers who legislate, presidents who write messages —even emperors who send telegrams—all seem impotent compared with the man on the hill, waiting to send a word down the tube of that telephone.

How futile the efforts of great capitalists and astute financiers, who seek to control the universe with their millions, when a single word from this man, who could not tell you the difference between a "bull" or a "bear," will plunge every bourse in the world into a boom or a panic!

A stranger, suddenly coming upon the group on the hill, would never suspect the immensity of the power they wield. From the entire absence of excitement, they might have been admiring a view, or surveying a new country. How poor it all is, as a spectacle, compared with the finish of a great race, — the thousands in the grand stands and tens of thousands on the downs, the hysterical excitement as the favourite rounds the bend and enters the straight for home, the hoarse shouts from the pale and anxious multitudes who are risking a few shillings on the result. Here all is quiet, calm, and business-like. In place of the spectators dressed in the latest fashion, 100,000 combatants, clad likewise up to date, but in khaki, each man carrying a rifle instead of a book and pencil, await the issue. There are no bookmakers to lay the odds; no erstwhile premier to lead the victor home. The course is packed with armed men. The grand stand is occupied by half a dozen shabbily-dressed, middle-aged gentlemen, who start, stop, and judge the events with the aid of a telephone. There is no lunch laid out in a tent, no cheerful popping of corks is heard: these luxuries are replaced by a small straw-basket filled with rice and pickles, and flasks of something that looks and tastes like bad sherry. Surely all this should be changed. Grand stands should be erected close to the scene of hostilities, and filled with kings, minis-

ters, fashionable crowds, eager multitudes — all, in fact, who are to gain or lose by the issue. For here the destinies of peoples are hanging in the balance, national debts are at stake, and the fate of empires is to be decided.

The hands of the clock now almost point to one o'clock, and it is time to turn once again to the thousands of soldiers crowding the trenches at the foot of the forts. The little group on the hill take one more look through their glasses at the smoking ridges two and a half miles away. Then the Chief of the Staff says a few words to Nogi, who answers in low tones. Ijichi next turns to the orderly at the telephone and says a few words to him. The orderly listens attentively, nodding his head, and occasionally interpolating "sodeska, sodeska" (all right), as the Chief of the Staff presses some important point on him. The orderly puts his mouth to the tube and talks for a few seconds down it. The fatal message has sped on its way. The group on the hill, having done their part of the business, line the side of the trench and eagerly watch the forts in front. For a few minutes nothing happens; then suddenly the spray of shells ceases to break. A few seconds pass, while the ground between the hostile line remains unoccupied. Then, from the trench at the foot of Higashi Keikwansan, hundreds of Japanese soldiers climb the sand-bags, and begin to charge for the Russian position. At the foot of the North Keikwansan Fort other men disappear for a few seconds down the tunnel leading into the fosse. For a little space they are lost to view, and then up against the side of the escarpment appear the scaling-ladders, followed by the heads of the men. On Nirusan a mob of soldiers dash across the cause-

way which has been made by throwing rubbish into the ditch. The causeway, however, does not quite reach to the summit of the escarpment, and they also are obliged to use scaling-ladders. The same scene is being enacted on Shojusan. The fight has commenced in earnest, and it is necessary to follow the fortunes of the combatants in detail from east to west, commencing with Higashi Keikwansan. Meanwhile the Japanese artillery has not been idle. The guns have been concentrated on the rear of the forts which are being assaulted, and also on all positions from which a fire could be brought to bear on the storming-parties.

The attack on Higashi Keikwansan, made by the 12th Regiment, was an almost exact repetition of the assault of October 30; only on that occasion the infantry passed right through the first trench and pressed on up to the foot of the escarpment of the fort, where disaster finally overtook them. This time the Japanese infantry left their trench by the three sap-heads and rushed across the intervening twenty or thirty yards. The Russians, from the trench itself, and from the hills behind, opened up a tremendous fusilade on the sap-heads, which speedily became choked with dead and wounded men. The survivors, fighting with the greatest courage, and splendidly led by their officers, pressed on; and a few minutes after the attack had commenced, the centre and east of the trench were in the hands of the Japanese. The Russian infantry made their way down the retreat towards the west, and rallying there, held their ground among the bomb-proof shelters, sand-bags, heaps of earth, and rubbish. It became necessary for the Japanese to drive them out before a further advance up the hills could be attempted; otherwise

the enfilading fire would cause the attack to fail. In spite of the utmost exertions of the Japanese infantry, this could not be accomplished; for the marksmen on the surrounding hill, lying in rows in their trenches, simply picked off the unfortunate soldiers, one by one, as they wheeled to the left and attacked the Russians in the same trench as themselves. The Japanese soldiers found the trench so blocked up with rubbish and sand-bags that many of them, seeing it was impossible to get at their opponents by forcing their way through these obstacles, preferred to climb outside. This immediately brought them under the fire of the Russian marksmen, who destroyed each group of men as soon as they appeared.

The reinforcements advanced in gallant fashion from the Japanese sap-heads; the regimental flag was carried forward over the fire-swept zone of thirty yards. Before it was half-way across, the ensign was killed, and another took his place, seizing the standard before it could fall. For about a minute the flag remained upright between the two lines, waving lazily in the breeze, and then slowly sank to earth as the second bearer was shot. In the course of the afternoon the flag changed hands three times. The utility of carrying forward such a conspicuous mark in the teeth of the enemy's fire was hard to see, and the mortality among the junior officers, to whose lot it fell to carry these glorious but dangerous emblems, was very great. The fight was maintained throughout the afternoon by individual soldiers, even after all chance of success had vanished. Later in the day some of the survivors endeavoured to regain the shelter of their own lines, and many were shot on the way back. Every officer of the battalion which

made the attack was either killed or wounded, many by bullets, others by hand-grenades, which latter the Russians again employed very effectively.

While the struggle on Higashi Keikwansan was in progress, another of a very different character, but of even more severity, was being waged on the North Keikwansan Fort. As I have already stated, the Japanese were in possession of the counterscarp galleries. They were therefore holding the ditch on the north face of the fort. In order to obtain the summit of the escarpment they had to place scaling-ladders against the steep face. Once on the summit, they expected to be able to force their way into the interior of the fort and drive out the Russians. This operation, however, depended largely for its success on the amount of damage inflicted by the 28-centimetre shells, thousands of which had been poured into the fort for the past month. The amount of damage inflicted on the interior of the fort was uncertain; all that was known was that the Russians always carefully repaired the damage as soon as it was inflicted. The Japanese had concentrated their artillery-fire on the crest of the escarpment, thus hoping to destroy the banquette, behind which the Russian infantry were ensconced. Much injury had undoubtedly been inflicted on the crest of the escarpment; but the Russians during the night always reorganised this, their front line of defence, by placing rows of sand-bags over the damaged portions. The summit of the escarpment was subdivided by sand-bags into numerous little compartments, so as to localise the effect of each shell, in the same manner as is done by the casemate of a battleship. The Russian infantry, hidden among the ruins and sand-bags, awaited the appearance of

the Japanese soldiers above the skyline; and it was quite certain that the leading files must be shot down to a man, unless their artillery had already cleared the Russians out.

The scaling-ladders had to be placed against the lower half of the escarpment—that is, the portion below the ground-level, which was perpendicular. By this means the infantry were enabled to reach the upper portion, which sloped sufficiently to allow a large number of men to maintain a precarious foothold massed together, and clinging to one another. The North Keikwansan Fort on the afternoon of November 26 presented a spectacle rare in warfare at all times, and hardly ever witnessed under modern conditions. I have seen paintings of battles and assaults on forts of one hundred years ago which were not dissimilar to what I shall endeavour to describe. The storming of Badajoz or Ciudad Rodrigo are cases in point. Substitute modern weapons and uniforms, and the picture will suffice. The last occasion on which troops fought under anything approaching similar conditions was in the Crimea when the Redan and Malakoff Forts were assaulted.

When, at one o'clock, the signal was given to advance, the tops of the bamboo scaling-ladders rose from the bottom of the ditch, above the ground-level. Then the leading soldiers mounted them, slowly and deliberately. The foremost men obtained a foothold on the sloping upper portion of the glacis, and assisted more of their comrades to join them, until a solid mass was formed, some twenty or thirty files wide, and to a depth of many ranks, the whole extending from the top of the scaling-ladders to a point just below the crest of the escarpment. The heads of

the rear files were just visible, as they stood on the ladders waiting until there was room for them to take their place on the glacis. This mass of men clinging together was so dense that you might have walked on their heads. In this formation, with the officers with drawn swords on either flank, the column moved forward. The front rank appeared for a moment on a level with the crest; then they were over the top, and exposed to full view. A dreadful volley from the Russians, hidden among the sand-bags, swept away the head of the formation, and strewed the escarpment with dead and wounded. The column wavered in its onward movement, and finally came to a standstill. The second and third ranks, unwilling to share the fate of their comrades in front, endeavoured to back over the crest of the escarpment for shelter. Unfortunately, the men in the rear ranks and those on the ladders, unable to see the state of affairs in front, and bent only on pressing forward, by sheer weight of numbers drove the leading file over the crest once again. These men immediately shared the fate of the first party, for "those behind cried 'Forward!' while those in front cried 'Back!'" The officers, on the flank, rushed forward when they saw the column waver and urged on their men. The pressure from behind caused the front ranks to open out, and many men found themselves on the crest among the sand-bags, carrying on a hand-to-hand fight with the Russians. Some of the latter were bayoneted and their places taken by the Japanese soldiers. The Russians, when they discovered the Japanese had succeeded in obtaining a lodgment on the escarpment, disdained all further cover and stood up to meet their opponents with the

bayonet. It was a splendid sight, and worthy of the best traditions of Russia, to see these bearded giants suddenly rise up on the skyline and confront the Mikado's soldiers, who looked like dwarfs beside the Siberian peasants. The fight immediately resolved itself into a series of individual combats between men, only separated from one another by rows of sand-bags. A small figure, singling out some Russian champion, would have at him with the bayonet, but generally with disastrous results to himself, for it seemed to me the Russians were more than able to hold their own at such close quarters. Apparently the Japanese did not care, and every soldier fought wildly until he was killed. Every now and then an officer would wave his sword in the air and rush forward a few yards, slashing furiously at some Russian, who defended himself with his bayonet to the best of his ability. Many of the Japanese, in order to assist their comrades, stood boldly up, and without attempting to take any cover endeavoured to pick off as many Russians as possible before being shot. Watching carefully, I do not think I saw a single one of these men remain standing for more than twenty or thirty seconds before being shot down. But in that short space of time he was able to fire a few rounds and possibly kill somebody; and that was all he desired to do. In this fierce infantry tussle for the possession of the escarpment the Russians had one great advantage; they employed hand-grenades, while the Japanese had to rely on their rifles and bayonets. When infantry are only separated by rows of sand-bags, the rifle is almost useless and the grenade all-important, for the latter can be thrown over into the mass of men on the other side. Time and time again

a Russian would stand up and hurl his bright little tin case, shining in the sun, among his opponents on the other side of the wall of bags. There it would burst, sending the unfortunate Japanese flying in all directions. The Russians employed grenades of varied kinds: some were round balls of iron with a fuse attached, which had to be lighted, of a thoroughly old-fashioned character, and had probably been found in Port Arthur when it was taken over from the Chinese. Others consisted of a little oblong tin case filled with powder. Others again, more effective still, were made of gun-cotton done up in little cotton bags; these resembled a sausage, and contained a detonator.

Although many of the bravest Japanese soldiers maintained a gallant struggle on the summit of North Keikwansan, it soon became evident that the attack was hanging fire; for the great mass of men only maintained their position on the escarpment, neither advancing nor retiring. I saw one Japanese soldier pick up a grenade which had been thrown at him, before it had had time to burst, and hurl it back amongst the Russians. Some of the officers walked about on the skyline, waving their swords, in a futile effort to induce their men to rush the fort. One officer I noticed especially. He walked about for a long time, waving his Samurai sword in the air, and taking tremendously long strides, which rather gave him the appearance of being drunk. He seemed to bear a charmed life, and remained unwounded for a long time, but was finally struck by a bullet, and rolled half-way down the glacis. There he recovered himself, and once more regained the top. He sat down just below the crest, and was joined by two other officers. All three were evidently discussing the

situation when a shell, fired from somewhere,—I hope from a Russian gun, though I am inclined to think it was one of the Japanese 28-centimetre shells,—burst among the group. When the smoke cleared there was no sign of the three. Either they were completely destroyed, or blown into the ditch. Such an inferno as that on the North Keikwansan Fort on the afternoon of November 26 has surely never been excelled, and rarely equalled. Both Russian and Japanese shells were bursting over the fort. The Japanese artillery, placed behind the hills, and unable to see their mark, were constantly dropping shells amongst their own men, so close were the combatants to each other. They did this on almost every occasion—so careless do they seem, and so prodigal of human life when once they have made up their minds to take a position.

The Russian grenades caused sad havoc among the Japanese infantry, many of whom became seized with panic and tore down the escarpment, finally rolling into the bottom of the ditch. The killed and wounded also fell from the top to the bottom of the 40 feet of glacis, tearing lanes through the mass of men who were still maintaining a precarious foothold, and even carrying away the scaling-ladders in their fall. The Russians poured oil into the ditches on Nirusan and Shojusan, which added to the horror of the struggle on those works, for the ditches had been partially filled in with corn-stalks to make a causeway over which the infantry might advance. When the defenders saw a mass of men struggling in the bottom of the ditches, they threw grenades on the saturated corn-stalks and set them ablaze. Hundreds of Japanese soldiers perished in this manner at the foot of the works.

Until sunset the Japanese infantry maintained their position on, or below, the crest of the escarpment; but it was evident, immediately the first rush was checked, that there would be very little hope of taking the fort afterwards. Many soldiers continued to keep up the struggle, but there was no determined rush forward of the whole body. About 3.30 an officer of high rank, in a black uniform, appeared on the right of a column half-way up the glacis. His presence seemed momentarily to stimulate the soldiers to fresh exertion. The column again moved forward a few yards; but here it halted, and that ended the engagement for the time being. The infantry held their ground until nightfall, and then retired once more into the counter-scarp galleries.

The assaults on forts Nirusan and Shojusan on the afternoon of November 26 were practically a repetition of what I have attempted to describe on North Keikwansan. There was the same determined rush of the Japanese infantry, and the equally desperate defence of the escarpments by the Russians. As all these attacks were made simultaneously, it was impossible for me to follow the others in detail, and having the best view of North Keikwansan, I particularly devoted my attention to that position. Nevertheless, I frequently looked towards Nirusan, to see what was taking place on the sombre glacis of that fort. The impression left on my mind is a ghastly one. I remember seeing numbers of soldiers appearing for a moment on the skyline, mingled with the waving of flags and the flashes of bayonets and swords. Then these figures would roll in tens and twenties from the top of the escarpment to the bottom of the ditch. Their places would be immediately taken by fresh

heroes, who met with the same fate a few minutes later. Every now and then a great sheet of flame, followed by clouds of black smoke, arose from the ditch: this was caused by the burning oil and corn-stalks. As the day wore on, the top of Nirusan became coated with black figures, who did not move, and were still there on the following day. These were the bodies of men who were killed among the sand-bags on the top of the fort. The gallant rushes of the Japanese infantry across the causeway met with no success throughout the afternoon. Each fresh advance only served to swell the numbers of the killed and wounded, and finally the attack was abandoned about the same time as the infantry were withdrawn from North Keikwansan. The 25th Regiment, who assaulted Shojusan, encountered the same obstacles, and failed in the same manner as their comrades on the other fort.

The fighting I had witnessed during the day was as nothing to that which took place during the night, and continued, without intermission, up to the morning of November 27. If ever an army and its generals lost their heads, the Japanese army did on that occasion. They behaved like gamblers who, having lost more than they could afford, determine to recover themselves by some desperate coup, which must mean either success or still worse disaster. Under cover of darkness a series of renewed attacks were made all along the line from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan. The programme was partly authorised and partly unauthorised. The soldiers seem to have got quite out of hand after a short time: they flung themselves on the enemy, regardless of death, in their mad endeavours to obtain a foothold on the escarpments of the forts.

On account of the darkness there was, and could be, no continuity or co-operation between the different attacks. The 12th Regiment again assaulted Higashi Keikwansan, and one battalion was annihilated. The 22nd Regiment renewed their attacks on North Keikwansan, only to be driven back into the ditch again and again with enormous loss. The troops in the Banrhusan works made feints of advancing against the Chinese Wall and Bodai. The 36th Regiment advanced from Hachimachayama and captured some Russian trenches in front of the Chinese Wall, but then could make no further progress. The attack of the 18th Brigade on Nirusan was of a peculiarly furious character, and some of the assaulting columns were able to cross the destroyed caponiere works and gain the escarpment; but they were mowed down by the fire of the machine-guns massed in the main gun-line, as well as by the fire of the Russian sharpshooters. The experiences of the 25th and 3rd Regiments, attacking Shojusan, were equally disastrous. No foothold was gained on any of the works, in spite of gallantry the like of which has seldom been seen in war.

The only attack which promised any hope of success was that made by General Nakamura on the Covering Work of Shojusan. When the 36th Regiment advanced from Hachimachayama and captured some Russian trenches in front of the Chinese Wall, Nakamura conceived a plan which he thought might lead to victory. He asked and obtained permission of General Nogi to make a night attack on the Covering Work of Shojusan. The spurs of the hill on which the work was built run down into the Suishien valley; if only the work could be captured, and at the same time the 36th Regiment could succeed in passing the Chinese Wall in front of

Hachimachayama, the two forts of Nirusan and Shojusan might be taken. There were too many risks in the scheme to appeal to any one except men rendered utterly desperate by repeated disaster. Nakamura's column, 2000 strong, started from the village of Suishien at midnight; but they were almost immediately located by the Russian searchlights, and after that the attempt was foredoomed to failure. The only chance of obtaining a success was by a complete surprise, and immediately the rays of light gave warning to the garrison, the attempt should have been abandoned. But unfortunately it is not in accordance with Japanese ideas to abandon a desperate enterprise once it has been decided upon, even when the conditions have suddenly changed for the worse. The Russians made no attempt to check the column of desperate men until it had ascended half-way up the slope. Then they turned their searchlight on the spot, and commenced to pump lead into the head of the column. General Nakamura fell low down the hill, shot through both thighs. A colonel, his second in command, fell dead a few yards higher up. Other officers rushed to the front and urged their men onwards. Close to the crest of the hill there was a wire-entanglement; no Japanese soldier succeeded in passing that obstacle—all were shot down as they approached it. At the termination of the siege, six weeks later, the bodies of these men were found where they had fallen. The cold had preserved them perfectly; and it was a tragic sight to walk up this hill and mark the melancholy pathway of Nakamura's futile gallantry. Happily, the General himself was not mortally wounded; he was carried back to the lines, conveyed to Japan, and subsequently recovered. It is impossible to describe in any detail the assaults,

repulses, and disasters of the night of November 26. The best idea of what took place can be obtained by imagining a winter's night of almost Arctic severity; a line of hills, varying in height, and covered with snow; and then these hills suddenly set on fire. Amidst the flames are bursting mines, shells, and hand-grenades. All through the night a Buddhist people and a Christian people are fighting for the possession of this line of blazing hills. They hurl themselves on one another with the bayonet; they shoot each other down; they blow one another to pieces with dynamite grenades; they tumble off scaling-ladders into great ditches filled with rubbish, saturated with oil, and lighted by grenades. Shouts of Banzai, curses, groans mingle with the roar of the artillery, the rattle of machine-guns, and the continuous fusilade of small arms. The artillery is helping on the inferno by pouring an indiscriminate fire into friend and foe alike.

Thus slowly passed this dreadful night, when thousands perished. Yet the hatred between them was not individual, or of their own creation. Each was obeying the orders of his ruler—one asleep in bed a thousand miles away, the other asleep in bed four thousand miles away. Were the dreams of the despots disturbed that night when twelve thousand men were killed or wounded?

But it is only in looking at these things from a distance that they appear strange or unnatural. At the time the stage on which they are enacted, the settings, the actors, even the accompanying music, are suited to the play. The destructive instinct is primitive to man: this instinct at least is satisfied by seeing everything on fire, and thousands of men fight-

ing for the possession of that they are endeavouring to destroy. No one can quite appreciate the sensation who has not experienced it. Tragedy rapidly becomes commonplace. "What a splendid sight!" "I hope they have one more try;" "They're getting it hot;" "I think I have seen enough, let's return to dinner," are the expressions heard on every side at the time.

Before Port Arthur spectators were apt to become surfeited with slaughter. Frequently I have heard, on the arrival of an orderly from headquarters with the announcement of an approaching attack, "Shall we go and see it? I am tired of watching the fighting; I think I shall stay in." Instead of "I shall not use my box for the opera to-night, I am tired of hearing Melba," it was, "I shall not use my bomb-proof for the assault this afternoon, I am tired of watching Ichinohe." The reasons for the two decisions are the same; the stage alone is different.

The losses of the Japanese on the four forts are difficult to estimate. One General put them as high as 12,000 men killed and wounded. As their losses for the combined operations, lasting from November 26 to December 5, were over 22,000 men killed and wounded, this estimate of 12,000 along the eastern section of the fort on November 26 cannot be considered an exaggeration.

While directing the operations of his division during the assault on November 26, Lieutenant-General Tsuchiya was seriously wounded. On that afternoon he was not in his bomb-proof shelter at the foot of Taikosan, but had gone forward to the second line of trenches in order to be in closer proximity to the Russian position. He was gazing through a loophole, when a rifle bullet struck him in the forehead, and

passed right through his head. The General immediately fell in the trench, and was picked up for dead. He was not, however, mortally wounded; and after hovering for some days between life and death, in a state of semi-consciousness, he finally revived sufficiently to be removed to Japan, where his recovery was subsequently complete. It is unlikely, however, that Tsuchiya will ever be able to take the field again. The 11th Division was thus left without a commander; but another officer was soon promoted to the vacant post. About the beginning of November it was announced in the papers, in the usual Japanese manner, that a distinguished engineer officer, Lieut.-General Samejima, had left Tokio for a certain place. The certain place was, in this instance, Port Arthur, and Samejima had been especially sent over from Japan to conduct the elaborate engineering operations against the permanent forts. He was given the command of the 11th Division when Tsuchiya was wounded, and retained it throughout the remainder of the siege.

I left my shelter after nightfall and made my way to the low ground, there to find in the twilight the fruits of the disaster. Hundreds of wounded soldiers were lying around the hospitals; hundreds more were arriving every minute from the front. Some were borne on stretchers, others dragged themselves wearily along. Outside the tents the surgeons were turning over the men, and sorting the most serious cases to be dealt with first; inside, other surgeons were operating as rapidly as they could. Depression reigned supreme; the immense sacrifice made by the troops that day had been all in vain. Thousands had fallen, with absolutely nothing to show for their loss. On the Shell Strewn Road I

passed a never-ending line of stretchers, on which the Chinese were bearing the wounded to the rear. Mingled with these, slightly-wounded soldiers were struggling along, who had been told that no stretchers could be provided for their use. Often two of these men assisted each other, a man wounded in the leg resting his arm on the shoulder of another wounded in the arm, so as to utilise all the sound limbs left between the two. Yet, in spite of their sufferings, there were no words of complaint; every man took his misfortunes with stoicism, and if any regret or remorse was expressed, it was on account of failure, for which each one felt himself partly responsible.

Thus ended the third of the general attacks on the eastern section of the fortifications. The events of August 23, October 30, and November 26 will form an indelible page in Japanese military annals. Putting aside the question whether any of the attacks were justifiable, everything that human endurance and bravery could accomplish was utilised to render them successful. There are some obstacles which not even the finest troops in the world can surmount; lead and steel must ever be superior to flesh, however gallant the spirit which spurs men on to the assault.

203 METRE HILL AFTER ITS CAPTURE,

SHOWING THE JAPANESE SAPS UP THE WEST FACE, AND SOLDIERS COLLECTING THE DEAD.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE ASSAULT AND CAPTURE OF 203 METRE HILL.

Marshal Oyama's Chief of the Staff, General Baron Kodama, and General Fukashima, had come down from Manchuria previous to the assault of November 26 to see for themselves the true state of affairs before the fortress. On the morning of November 27 General Nogi and these two officers realised that the assault on the eastern section of the fortifications was an utter failure. Therefore the first part of the programme had broken down. There was now no possibility of immediately capturing the fortress, and thus bringing about the destruction of the Russian squadron.

After the heavy loss entailed, it must have required men of iron determination to turn from this scene of carnage in the east and on the very next day give orders which were to lead to a still worse scene of carnage in the west. The manner in which the Japanese looked immediately to another quarter of the field to retrieve their fortunes when the assault in the east had failed, must always command the admiration of critics. It proves how desperately in earnest they were, and the importance they attached to the destruction of the Russian squadron in the harbour. It seldom happens in warfare that a general

is prepared to lose the lives of thousands of his soldiers for the mere purpose of capturing a single hill which is not 200 yards long on the top, but this was the issue that confronted the Japanese officers on November 27.

When the Generals turned their faces to the west on the morning of November 27, they realised that the result of the operations against 203 Metre Hill would be fraught with the most momentous consequences. If success crowned their efforts, and 203 Metre Hill was captured, the Russian fleet would be immediately driven out of the harbour, or else sunk at its anchorage. If the attack was a failure, the siege would be brought to a standstill, and there would be no alternative but to sit down and starve the garrison out, a process which might take months, and which might allow the Baltic Squadron sufficient time to arrive on the scene of hostilities. General Nogi determined to throw every available man at his disposal into this attack, and, no matter at what cost, to capture 203 Metre Hill. The struggle which raged on the slopes of that hill for the next ten days will ever be regarded as one of the most memorable incidents of warfare. It was of such a Homeric character, that surely if it had taken place two thousand years ago, the traditions and legends attaching to the ground and to the combatants would have come down to us in verse and song. It is more than likely that when centuries have rolled away, and the Siege of Port Arthur is numbered amongst the forgotten events of history, men visiting the scene of the struggle will stand on 203 Metre Hill and endeavour to recall to memory what makes the name familiar to their minds.

An officer who visited Port Arthur some months after the conclusion of the siege lectured at Chatham on his experiences. He stated that when he stood on 203 Metre Hill he was seized with an uncanny feeling, even though the dead had long since been buried, because on the ground over which the Japanese had advanced to the attack the grass refused to grow again, and the bare surface of the hillside was left, a lasting testimony to the terrible nature of the struggle.

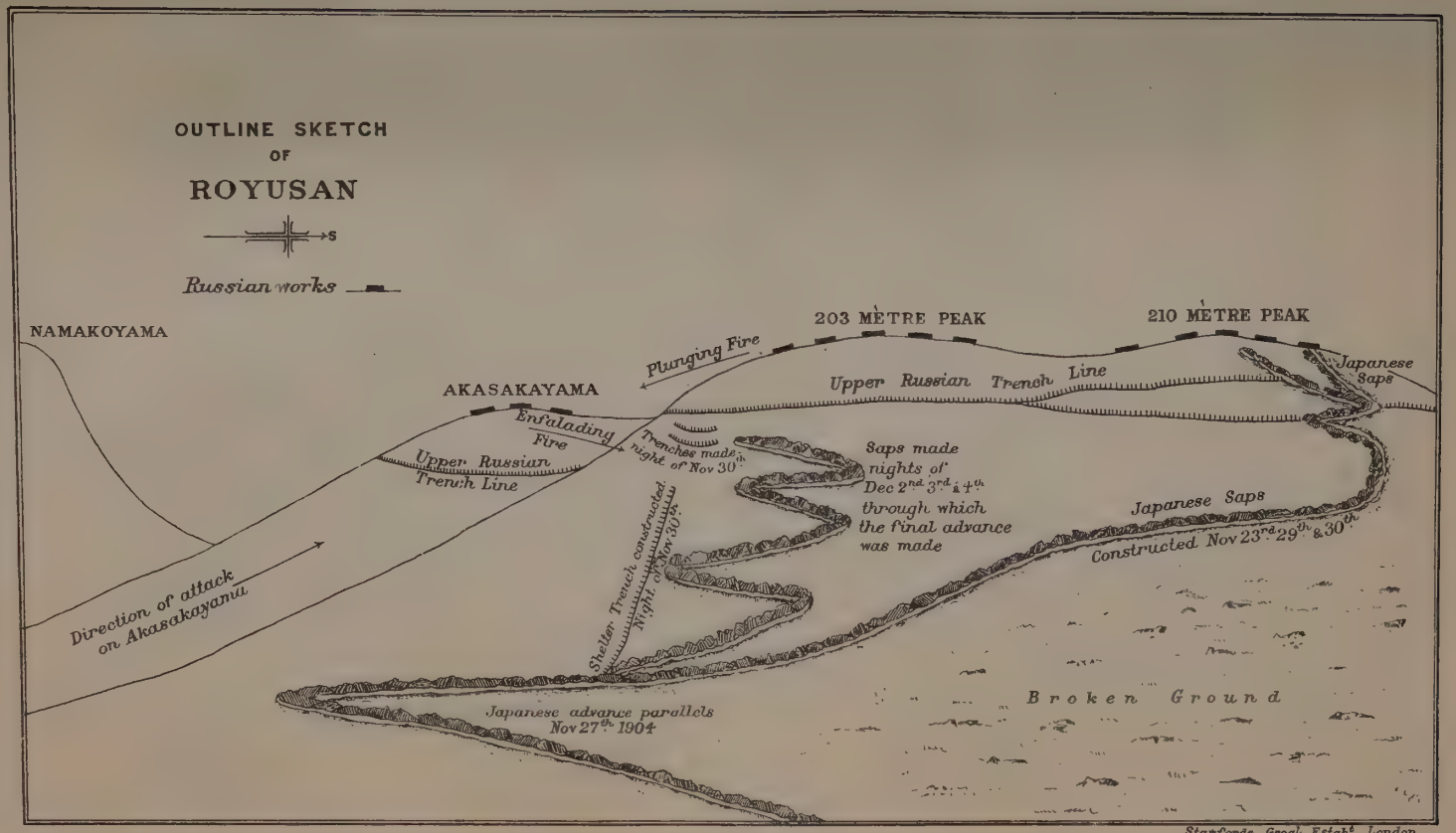
The Japanese soldiers, and the Russians for that matter, fought with a courage and desperation which excelled anything that had previously occurred during the siege. They literally hurled themselves on one another apparently regardless of death, each man determined to reach the summit of the mountain or else to find a last resting-place on its slopes. As a rule, the private soldiers of armies are not very cognisant of the actual importance of a position they are called upon to take or to defend. The struggle for 203 Metre Hill was an exception. No matter how ignorant the Siberian peasant who lay among the trenches on the top of the mountain might be, and no matter how little acquainted with strategical problems the Japanese soldier in the trenches at its foot, the merest tyro could appreciate the issues at stake and the results that hung on success or failure. Both armies realised that this final throw of the dice meant more to the winner than all the combats that had waged round the fortress up to that time.

Failure to the Russians meant the destruction of the Pacific Squadron, for the preservation of which they had fought so gallantly, and that meant the end of the hopes of a junction with the Baltic Squadron. The failure of the mission of the Baltic Squadron was

equivalent to the downfall of Russia in the Far East. If the Japanese were successful, an immense weight of doubt and uncertainty would be immediately lifted from the shoulders of the nation. Once the Port Arthur Squadron was destroyed, Admiral Togo would be fully competent to deal with the Baltic Fleet. The capture of the hill might also hasten the fall of the fortress. These were the issues for which the soldiers fought.

Yet with that fatal neglect which dogged Russia's fortunes in the Far East, 203 Metre Hill had not been properly fortified. The artillery officers had pointed out to General Stoessel the importance of the position before the siege commenced, but apparently Stoessel did not act on their advice as early as he might have done. Perhaps it is not fair to blame Stoessel; the all-powerful Viceroy Alexeieff should have seen to the proper fortification of the town and harbour entrusted to his care years before war was declared. Alexeieff must now bitterly repent his neglect when he sees its far-reaching results. A permanent fort, with an escarpment ditch and caponiere galleries costing only a few thousand roubles, placed on the summit of 203 Metre Hill, might have preserved the remnant of the Russian squadron in Port Arthur; it might have brought about a union with the Baltic Squadron; and it might have changed the entire situation in the Far East. Russia has paid heavily for her overweening confidence and failure to prepare for war, but possibly the neglect of this isolated hill to the west of the fortress cost her the one chance she had of redeeming her position, for it destroyed the last opportunity of a junction between her squadrons.

203 Metre Hill is the name by which this famous


OUTLINE SKETCH
OF
ROYUSAN
S
Russian works
NAMAKOYAMA
AKASAKAYAMA
203 METRE PEAK
210 METRE PEAK
Plunging Fire
Upper Russian Trench Line
Japanese Saps
Enfilading Fire
Upper Russian Trench Line
Trenches made night of Nov 30th
Saps made nights of Dec 2nd 3rd & 4th through which the final advance was made
Japanese Saps
Constructed Nov 23rd 29th & 30th
Direction of attack on Akasakayama
Shelter Trench constructed Night of Nov 30th
Broken Ground
Japanese advance parallels Nov 27th 1904
Stanfords Geogl Estabt London.

hill is always likely to be known, but in reality that name was given to it in error. It has two peaks, the one to the south-west 210 metres high, and the other to the north-east 203 metres high: these are connected by a neck. The Russians call the position Temple Mountain, and the Japanese christened it Royusan. In the course of the assault and capture of the hill, which I am about to relate, it will be necessary to refer to both peaks. It would lead to confusion to speak of the whole position as 203 Metre Hill, as to refer to the north-east peak, as distinguished from the south-west, as 203 metre peak. I shall therefore, when speaking of the hill as a whole, call it Royusan.

Royusan is one of the jumble of hills to the north-west of Pigeon Bay known as the Metre Range, and stands by itself. On the west are some low hills, which since September had been occupied by the Japanese; to the north-west is Namakoyama, also captured by the Japanese in September. The north face of Royusan slopes down to a low neck connecting the hill to another hill slightly lower, called Akasakayama, which was held by the Russians in force. Akasakayama has Namakoyama immediately to the west of it, and a narrow valley separates the two positions. Royusan and Akasakayama both assist each other, for the latter hill enfilades the west face of its higher neighbour, and Royusan commands Akasakayama, and from its summit a plunging fire can be poured on any force making an assault.

The field-works on the summit of Royusan were admirably constructed, and could not have been made more formidable except by having in their place a permanent fort similar to North Keikwansan or Nirusan.

The summits of both the 203 and 210 metre peaks had been excavated to a considerable depth, and the excavations roofed in with iron rails and great beams, which had piled on them tons of earth and sand-bags. They were bomb-proof to any shell except those fired from the 28-centimetre howitzers, and, as I have said elsewhere, the Russians never anticipated having to contend with ordnance of such a calibre. Royusan was not isolated from the main group of forts in the west; from Isusan a well-constructed line of entrenchments had been made along the low hills connecting that fort to the east slope of Royusan. The Russians had excavated a tunnel up the east slope by which they could pass their reinforcements to the summit of the hill; the tunnel terminated at a point just beneath the neck connecting the two peaks, and underground traverses gave access to the works on their crest. The west face of the hill—that on which an attacking force must necessarily advance—dropped sheer down from the summit for about 40 yards, forming a steep escarpment. From the foot of the escarpment to the bottom of the hill the slope is more gentle. At the foot of the escarpment the Russians had constructed their upper trench-line, and near the bottom of the hill was an advanced line of entrenchments and also a wire-entanglement. On Akasakayama were works similar to those on Royusan. No guns except machine guns were mounted on either position.

The Japanese had not forgotten the lesson of their repulse from Royusan in September. Ever since that time they had been busy sapping against the position from the low hills to its west. The task was a difficult one, because it was necessary to sap downhill to the valley at the foot of Royusan. Every yard of the

sapping trenches was exposed to the fire of the Russian marksmen on the higher elevation, and therefore the saps had to be made much deeper than was ordinarily necessary, and this took time. Nevertheless, by the third week in November the most advanced parallel was finished at the foot of Royusan. The natural point from which to deliver an attack was from the south-west against the 210 metre peak. Troops advancing from that direction would not be exposed to a cross-fire from Akasakayama. But before any attempt on the 210 metre peak became possible, it was necessary to dislodge the Russians from their trenches at the base of the hill. The Japanese had carried their saps right through the wire-entanglement before the series of assaults on the hill commenced on November 27. Throughout the previous two months Royusan had been systematically bombarded by the Japanese artillery, including two of the 28-centimetre howitzers, which were in position close to the headquarters of the 1st Division. It was hoped that this bombardment would have seriously damaged the Russian fieldworks.

The position of the combatants on the morning of November the 27th, when the struggle commenced, was as follows: the Japanese occupied their parallel at the foot of the west face of the hill, and were only separated from the advanced line of Russian trenches by a very short distance. Throughout the whole of the 27th, Royusan was furiously bombarded by the Japanese guns, and just at dusk two battalions of the 15th Regiment rushed the lower line of Russian trenches. Desperate fighting with the bayonet took place in the twilight, for the Russian infantry offered a stubborn resistance; but the Japanese were not to be

denied, and those Russians who were not bayoneted were obliged to retire to their upper trench-line. Having driven the Russians out of this advanced position, the Japanese proceeded under cover of darkness to push their saps higher up the hill towards the crest of 210. The Russians, from their upper trench-line, did their best to check this advance by an indiscriminate fusilade, and the casualties among the Japanese were heavy. There was no time to dig a trench, so a high wall of made sand-bags, which were passed up from the foot of the hill, was constructed instead. This answered the purpose for the time being, and enabled the 15th Regiment to hold their ground fairly close to the upper Russian trench-line beneath the 210 peak. At 8 A.M. on November the 28th an advance was made by the 15th Regiment against the crest of 210. Eleven companies of infantry took part in this assault, eight in the fighting-line and three in reserve behind 174 Metre Hill. The fighting for the possession of 210 was very severe, and the losses of the Japanese were extremely heavy. For some time the infantry made little progress in face of the Russian sharp-shooters ensconced among the sand-bags on the top of the hill, who stuck to their positions with wonderful pertinacity in spite of the rain of shells from the howitzers and naval guns, and the shrapnel from the field artillery which searched every corner of the crest, and, as was afterwards shown, with the most deadly effect. At 2.30 in the afternoon about 150 Japanese soldiers reached the crest of 210 and established themselves there.

While this attack was in progress two battalions of the 1st Regiment were launched against Akasakayama, but they were driven back with dreadful loss. Not

only were they exposed to the fire of the Russian marksmen in the trenches on that hill, but also to a plunging fire from the summit of 203. Against such odds it was hopeless to struggle, and the 1st Regiment were driven back to their parallels. Their gallant old colonel, Teruda, fell shot through the body, seriously wounded, and his adjutant was killed by his side. The successful occupation of the crest of 210 was the signal for a general advance up the west side of Royusan against the 203 metre peak by the soldiers of the 1st Kobi Reserve Brigade. It was hoped that the soldiers who had gained the crest of 210 would be able to keep down the fire of the Russian infantry holding 203, and that this would allow that peak to be also captured. An advance against 203 always meant that the assaulting party would be invalided by the enemy on Akasakayama, but on this occasion it was hoped that they would be too engrossed in meeting the attack of the two battalions of the 1st Regiment which had been sent against them to interfere in the combat. These sanguine expectations were foredoomed to failure. The Japanese infantry on the crest of 210 found it impossible to maintain their ground. The Russians concentrated on the peak a tremendous fire from the Tayanko forts; they also moved a battery of field-guns to the south of Royusan, and opened up with shrapnel on the flank of the Japanese soldiers on 210. This same artillery-fire had brought disaster to the Japanese when they captured 210 in September, and now again, after a brief occupation of the summit, they were once more driven below the crest, where a party managed to maintain their ground. The Japanese saps were pushed up to this point, and the foothold thus obtained was never again abandoned, and became the

base of all subsequent operations. The abandonment of the crest of 210 was fatal to the party assaulting the west face of 203. The Japanese soldiers advanced up the slope in the teeth of a tremendous fire, and actually occupied the upper Russian trench-line; but when they attempted to storm the summit they were met by a devastating rifle-fire, and, what was still more effective, the Russians at this short distance were able to employ their hand-grenades with great effect. The attack of the 1st Regiment on Akasakayama having proved a costly failure, the Russians on that hill were enabled to devote their entire attention to the battalions assaulting 203. The combined effects of the shrapnel, hand-grenades, and enfilading fire from Akasakayama were too much for even the Japanese infantry, and just below the crest of 203 the men broke and fled down the hill to their parallel at the foot. Thus the only success attending the day's operations was the occupation and retention of an angle below the crest of 210.

On November the 29th no fresh attempt was made on any of the positions. The aspect of affairs was beginning to look serious: two general attacks on Royusan had failed, and also one on Akasakayama. The Russians, although their losses had been heavy, still stuck to the crest with the same determination, and refused to be driven out by the terrible shell-fire rained on the summit by the Japanese guns.

At ten on the morning of the 30th, a company of Japanese infantry holding the ground already won below the crest of 210, under cover of the guns, which had apparently at this time forced the Russian infantry back over the east side of the mountain towards Port Arthur, advanced still farther, and seized

the ground almost on the crest of 210. A high wall of sand-bags was immediately constructed, the Japanese holding the west side of it, and the Russians, returning to the crest, established themselves on the east side. The opposing infantry carried on a continual fight across the top with bayonets, rifles, and hand-grenades, while the artillery, both Russian and Japanese, was obliged to desist from a further bombardment of this portion of the hill through fear of hitting their own men, so close were the combatants. The Japanese guns, therefore, devoted their attention to shelling the crest of 203 and the rear of 210, hoping to prevent reinforcements advancing to the assistance of the men of 210. The afternoon of November the 30th witnessed some further desperate fighting. At 2 P.M. the 1st Regiment again advanced against Akasakayama. In spite of the bravery and gallant leading of the officers, very little progress was made, and the attack was everywhere repulsed except in one place. Just beneath the centre of the first Russian trench was some dead ground, and here a small party of Japanese soldiers under the command of two subalterns managed to maintain themselves. For some time no further advance was made, but suddenly the two subalterns, to quote the words of the Japanese official report, "grew angry," and calling upon their men to follow them, they hurled themselves on the Russian trench. The Russians were driven out or bayoneted, and the small party of Japanese remained for some time unmolested. Then a curious thing happened; a party of forty or fifty Russian soldiers, either in sheer foolhardiness, or because they thought the Japanese holding the centre of the trench had evacuated the ground or had been killed, left their trenches on the crest of Akasakayama

and delivered a counter-attack on the Japanese in their front. They charged down the slope, and were allowed to get quite close to the trench, some of them actually entering it before the Japanese showed their hand; then a fight at close quarters settled the matter, for the Russians, knowing that to go back would be fatal, preferred to jump into the trench among their opponents and to die fighting. This they did; not a man appeared again, so it is presumable that they were all killed. The turn of the Japanese came shortly afterwards, for their own field artillery, either in ignorance of the true state of affairs or because they could not see distinctly, opened a fierce shrapnel-fire all over Akasakayama, sweeping the crest and the trench in which their own infantry were taking cover. These unfortunate men were so badly mauled by the fire that they took a choice of evils, and decided to evacuate the position and run down the slope under the fire of the Russian marksmen on the crest, rather than be shot to pieces by their own guns.

While this attack on Akasakayama was being made, a mixed force, composed of battalions taken from the 26th, 27th, and 28th Regiments of the 7th Division, which had not been engaged before during the war, were ordered to attack 203. This assault was an almost exact repetition of the disastrous attempt of the afternoon of the 28th. The men, advancing in close order, reached the upper Russian trench-line, where, under the steep escarpment of the hill, there was some cover from the fire of the marksmen on the crest; but when a battalion attempted to climb the last forty yards, it was again driven back by the combined effects of bullets, bayonets, and hand-grenades. Again the soldiers, broken, fled under this punishment, and

the horrid sight of panic-stricken men, shot while running, was witnessed. Thus did the 30th close in renewed disaster for the besiegers.

In spite of their heavy losses the Japanese generals were more than ever determined to capture the mountain, and although I have only so far recorded Japanese repulses and disasters, it must not be forgotten that hour by hour the Russian defence was being weakened by these repeated assaults, and, above all, by the concentrated effects of the Japanese artillery-fire. No earthworks could withstand the 28-centimetre shells for any length of time. These monsters smashed up everything, broke through the roofs of the bomb-proofs, and slew the infantry crouching for shelter therein. When now attack was in progress, the majority of the Russians were withdrawn from the crest of the hill down the reverse slope, and only returned when the sentries on the crest gave warning of a new advance by the Japanese. The Japanese soldiers, holding one-half of the crest of 210, were able to command a view of the east slope of Royusan. According to their usual custom, the telephone had been run up the hill to this advanced position, and thus the men on 210 were able to tell the batteries the position of the Russian reinforcements on the east slope. A heavy artillery-fire was concentrated on the east slope, which made it extremely difficult for the Russians to reinforce the troops on the mountain.

On one point the Japanese generals were satisfied; they saw it would be quite useless to attempt to capture Akasakayama until Royusan was taken, and so no further attempt was made on the former hill.

During the night of the 30th the engineers, assisted by the infantry, commenced to run a shallow trench, at

right angles to their most advanced parallel, up the face of 203, the object being to provide some cover for infantry from the enfilading fire poured on them from Akasakayama every time an advance was made against the 203 peak. The Russians, hearing the noise of the working-parties, commenced to fire down the hill at random; but even this erratic fire caused the Japanese many casualties, judging by the number of dead who lay about this double row of sand-bags on the following morning. The trench was pushed two-thirds of the way up the first and more gentle slope of Royusan; and then, either because daylight appeared before the task was completed, or because the angle of the mountain provided some cover, the work ceased, and a party of soldiers were advanced into the upper Russian trench-line beneath the sheer escarpment of 203. They hastily constructed several shallow shelter-trenches parallel to it, and were in occupation of them when dawn broke.

On the morning of December 1 the Japanese were in possession of half the crest of 210, holding one side of the high wall of sand-bags while the Russians held the other, and the Japanese also had the party of soldiers I have already mentioned in the shallow trench under the escarpment of 203. Thus for the first time a lodgment was obtained close to the crests of both heights. This was a distinct advance; but the position of the men under 203 was in reality a precarious one, for they could not retreat, neither could they be reinforced during the day, because the ill-constructed trench, running straight up the face of the mountain, provided no cover from a fire from the summit, and only a partial protection from the enfilading fire of Akasakayama. Nevertheless, it was decided to deliver

INSIDE THE UPPER RUSSIAN TRENCH-LINE ON 203 METRE HILL,

SHOWING JAPANESE AND RUSSIAN DEAD AFTER THE CAPTURE OF THE HILL.

another attack on 210 and 203 that afternoon, the 1st, at 3 P.M.

On the morning of the 1st, Royusan presented a curious spectacle from 174 Metre Hill, on which I was watching the operations. So many shells had burst all over it that very little grass was left on its slopes, and the bare surface of the mountain was covered with the dead bodies of the Japanese soldiers. I endeavoured through my glasses to count the numbers of the dead lying about the west face of the hill, but soon gave up the task, for there were hundreds, especially just beneath the upper Russian trench-line, where some of the severest fighting had taken place.

Throughout the morning of the 1st, Royusan was bombarded furiously by the Japanese artillery, and each shot weakened—imperceptibly, it is true—the resisting power of the Russians. Between 2 and 3 P.M., many battalions of Japanese infantry were pushed forward from the valley behind Namakoyama into the parallels fronting the hill. It was easy to see that the troops belonged to the newly arrived 7th Division from the smart appearance of their equipment. Each soldier went into action in his khaki-coloured overcoat, for, although the weather was beautifully fine and clear, it must be remembered that it was freezing hard throughout all these operations. These coats were made very loose, and with very long sleeves, which turned up, and were intended to be worn over the regulation black overcoat. The lines of men wound their way through the parallel at the foot of the hill, and then up through the saps leading to the ground still held by the Japanese on the crest of 210. Every soldier crept forward with his head bent considerably to protect himself from

stray bullets coming over the top of the sand-bags, which were none too high. The soldiers holding the crest of 210 were only separated from the Russians by the high wall of sand-bags I have already described, and while these movements were being carried on they were waging a furious combat with the Russians across the top. The only weapon with which the opposing forces could get at one another was the hand-grenade, and these were used by both sides. When the line of men who had advanced from the parallels at the foot of Royusan reached the wall of sand-bags where the advance party were holding their ground, they split up into two groups and delivered two separate attacks. An officer, leading one party, jumped over the row of sand-bags and, followed by about 100 men, swept down the upper Russian trench-line towards the point where the Japanese infantry were still holding their grounds beneath the crest of the 203 metre peak. The officer led his men to almost certain destruction with the greatest heroism: he could be distinguished from the rest of the party because he had discarded his overcoat. Although, when this attack began, Royusan looked as if it was deserted, the crest of the mountain quickly sprang into life with Russian soldiers when the Japanese closed upon them. The party I have mentioned were soon picked off by the enemy hiding behind sand-bags, heaps of rubbish, and *débris* caused by the bombardments. The second party of Japanese, who endeavoured to pass the wall of sand-bags they had erected on the crest of 210, and thus sweep the whole summit of the mountain clear of the enemy, met with a stubborn resistance. The Russians plied them with hand-grenades with disastrous results, and it was speedily seen that no attack would be successful in that quarter. Many of

the assaulting party ran down the slope looking for shelter from the grenades, but as there was practically none, the majority were killed. While this fight was in progress hundreds of Japanese soldiers were crowded into the parallels facing 203, and it looked as if a general assault might be made at any moment, but before it could be delivered an unforeseen incident again completely upset the plan of attack.

I have already mentioned a party of Japanese soldiers who held the ground beneath the crest of 203, who had maintained their position since the previous night among the rocks and in the shelter trenches which they had thrown up. Without any warning, and for no apparent reason as far as I could see, this body left cover and bolted down the slope towards the parallel full of infantry awaiting the order to advance. The Russians on Royusan and on Akasakayama fired fast and furiously among these men as they ran, causing a great number to fall by the way, the survivors climbing over their trenches to safety. Thus before the grand attack had begun, the advance post, which should have been the base from which it would have been made, was lost. Under the circumstances further attack that afternoon would have been useless, so it was abandoned; the day closed with the Russians in full possession of Akasakayama, 203, and half the crest of 210, while the Japanese infantry still maintained their hold of the other half of the same peak.

On the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th no attack was made against any of the positions. During the nights the engineers commenced to sap up the centre of 203 metre peak at a point where there is a slight dip in the ground, which in a measure afforded protection against the enfilading fire from Akasakayama. These saps were commenced

some way beneath the first Russian trench from the point where the shallow trench built on the night of the 30th stopped. It was an elaborate piece of work, and well carried out. The walls of the trenches were made very high, and afforded complete cover from the fire of the Russians from the crest of Royusan and from Akasakayama. All through these three days the artillery never ceased its bombardment, pounding away at the crest of the hill, and smashing everything on it to matchwood. How the Russians ever managed to maintain their ground is inexplicable, and their prowess as a defensive infantry was never put to a severer test, and never did the men respond in a more gallant and devoted manner to the call. The majority of the troops were withdrawn down the east slope when no attack was threatened, and there waited for the fresh onslaught of their equally redoubtable foe; but even then the Japanese shells found them out, for many of the guns were purposely trained on the reverse slope of the mountain to prevent reinforcements arriving on the crest. Truly the struggle for Royusan was a battle of giants, and no country in the palmiest epoch of her history ever sent into the field soldiers who fought with more determination, courage, and absolute disregard for life than was shown by the infantry of Russia and Japan during those days.

By the morning of December 5 the saps up the centre of Royusan were as far advanced as was practicable, and the engineers once more handed over the task of driving out the Russians to the infantry. The final attack on all sides of Royusan was to be delivered that day. The issues at stake were so great, and another repulse would be so disastrous, that every precaution possible under the circumstances was taken

to ensure its success. Each soldier realised that the critical moment had arrived, and that if this assault failed the attack might have to be abandoned.

At an early hour in the morning all the guns which could be brought to bear on Royusan from any direction were concentrated on the doomed mountain; another of those bombardments took place which can only be described as terrific, from howitzers throwing shells of 500 pounds, from naval guns of great size, from field howitzers, and from field artillery. Unless you have seen one of those great artillery duels it is impossible to realise what they are like. There is a feeling in the air on such occasions that modern ordnance has so completely out-classed the men who are directing the fire and those who will make the assault, that for the time being you are living in a different sphere. The soldiers, instead of being afraid or awe-struck by the passing overhead of these countless enormous projectiles, and the disturbance to earth and atmosphere caused by their explosion, are proud to be included in the revels of such giants, and, like humble supers on the same stage with some great actor, catch the sublimity of his performance, and each man does his best to obtain, if possible, a little of the reflected glory. Royusan looked as if it was on fire, and except for a small angle of 210 where the Japanese held their ground ready to spring forward, not an inch of the crest and rear escaped this cannonade.

One of the brigadiers of the 7th Division, Major-General Saito, was placed in executive command of the forces told off to make the final attack. Eight battalions of the 7th Division were placed at his disposal, and throughout the morning while the bombardment was in progress, these men were kept in shelter

behind Namakoyama and 174 Metre Hill. Soon after mid-day the battalions were ordered to fall in and make their way to the parallels at the foot of Royusan. The regimental ensigns were massed in the valley through which the troops were obliged to pass on their way to the fighting line, and as each battalion swept proudly by it was made to halt and salute the colours, and the men swore that they would either capture the hill or else not return alive. It was determined to rouse the enthusiasm of the men to the highest pitch, and no better method could have been found than recalling to their memory, as their last impression before they advanced against the enemy, that the honour and perhaps the safety of their country depended on their exertions.

When the leading battalion arrived at the parallel at the foot of the hill, the men were sent forward through the saps which had been constructed on the three previous nights up the centre of the west face of 203. When the advance sap could hold no more men the remainder were kept in reserve in the parallels at the foot of the hill, to be sent forward if the occasion required. Large reinforcements were also advanced to the crest of 210, which the Japanese still held in force, only separated from the Russians by the high wall of sand-bags. About 3 P.M. the bombardment of 210 suddenly ceased, and the Japanese soldiers holding half that peak climbed their sand-bag wall, and encountering very little resistance were soon in possession of the whole crest. Only three Russians were found alive among the battered earthworks, one of whom was the commander of the troops on the mountain. Immediately the success of the troops on 210 was seen, the soldiers in the advance sap on 203 were ordered to rush the

upper Russian trench-line only forty yards away. About 500 men went forward, while many others lined the vacated trench and kept down the fire of any Russians who might attempt to oppose the advance. The Japanese infantry entered the upper Russian trench-line almost without a shot being fired, and then a brief pause occurred while the artillery indulged in one final bombardment of the crest. A few minutes later the soldiers who had occupied the upper Russian trench-line reappeared on the far side of it and commenced to climb the rough escarpment of 203. They were watched with great anxiety, because it was this part of the climb which had always previously proved fatal. The soldiers on 210 also moved forward down the neck separating 210 from 203 simultaneously with the advance of the troops from the upper Russian trench-line. They encountered very little resistance, for the Russians had abandoned the summit of Royusan, and almost before spectators could realise what had happened, the Mikado's soldiers were in possession of both peaks and outlined against the sky. No surprise was expressed at the Russian retirement, for the summit of Royusan had been rendered quite untenable by the continual bombardments, and not even a mouse could have found safe shelter on it.

The feelings of the first Japanese officers and men who stood on the summit of 203 Metre Hill must have been akin to those of the French army when they gazed for the first time on Moscow. Then only could the Japanese realise the immensity and full significance of their success. For the first time they saw almost within grasp the goal for which they had struggled so long and so bravely. Before them

lay the waters of the harbour and the Russian warships at anchor. They knew the major half of their task was accomplished: the fortress might continue to hold out, but the battleships were doomed. The harbour provided no protection, and their only alternative to being sunk at their anchorage was to put to sea immediately and face Togo, while the Baltic Squadron was still thousands of miles away.

Akasakayama remained in the hands of the Russians after the capture of Royusan, but the Japanese infantry were not called upon to make any further assault on the hill. The Russians quickly realised, after a short experience of the effects of a plunging fire from Royusan, that Akasakayama was no longer tenable. On the evening of the 6th, under cover of darkness, they evacuated the position, which was quickly occupied by the Japanese.

The exact losses of the Japanese in any particular engagement were always difficult to estimate, and the numbers of those who fell on and around 203 Metre Hill cannot be stated accurately. I consider that somewhere between 9000 and 10,000 men killed and wounded is a fair computation, but others place their casualties as high as 12,000. Certainly they were not less than 9000, and probably considerably more. The 7th Division alone had over 6000 men killed and wounded in this their first engagement.

The mountain after its capture would have been an ideal spot for a Peace Conference. There have probably never been so many dead crowded into so small a space since the French stormed the great redoubt at Borodino. At the foot of the hill the first line of Russian entrenchments had been carried; on the evening of the 27th some severe bayonet

203 METRE HILL AFTER ITS CAPTURE,

SHOWING THE DEAD JAPANESE SOLDIERS LYING NEAR THE SUMMIT, AND MEN FROM THE REGIMENTS ENDEAVOURING TO IDENTIFY THEIR COMRADES.

fighting had taken place. The Russian and Japanese soldiers lay side by side just where they had fallen. In one case a Russian and a Japanese soldier had bayoneted one another simultaneously. As you advanced up the slopes of the hill the bodies grew thicker and thicker, for here the assaulting parties had caught the enfilading fire from Akasakayama. It had been freezing throughout the days of the attack, and the bodies of the fallen were perfectly preserved. It was curious to examine the various attitudes and expressions on the marble countenances of the slain. Some seemed to have died a natural and painless death from the ease of their posture and the contented, sometimes happy, expression on their faces; others had a horrible look of abject terror marked on every feature. These were men who had probably not been killed outright, and to whom the terrors of death came slowly. Many of the dead, especially the Japanese who had been struck down while advancing up the steep slope of the hill, had their teeth clenched and a look of fierce resolve written on their countenances. The Japanese are horrible to look at when dead, for their complexion turns quite green, which gives them an unnatural appearance. It was a surprise to me to notice among the Japanese killed so many who were merely boys: these men belonged to the 7th Division, and, for some reason I am unable to determine, men of that division were mostly young recruits. It is a curious fact that the younger the soldier the more excited his appearance after death. The youths who went into action for the first and last time when they assaulted 203 Metre Hill had stamped on their features all the varied emotions that are supposed to animate young soldiers on such

occasions. Their look was a mingled one of determination, anxiety, and of immense astonishment. No doubt that is exactly how they felt when the iron storm burst upon them.

From the upper Russian trench-line to the crest of the hill the scene baffled description: on this last forty yards the assaulting columns had been met not only by rifle and shell fire, but by hundreds of dynamite grenades. The dead and wounded who fell near the crest of the mountain were simply pounded to pieces by the concentrated artillery-fire of both the Russian and Japanese guns. There were practically no bodies intact; the hillside was carpeted with odd limbs, skulls, pieces of flesh, and the shapeless trunks of what had once been human beings, intermingled with pieces of shells, broken rifles, twisted bayonets, grenades, and masses of rock loosed from the surface by the explosions. The works on the crest of both peaks had been absolutely smashed to pieces: it was impossible to trace their original lines. Amidst this confused jumble of rocks, sand-bags, shells, charred timber, broken rifles, bits of uniform, and accoutrements of every description, both Russian and Japanese soldiers lay in hundreds. On the east of the mountain were to be found the majority of the Russian dead, and on the west the majority of the Japanese; but the summit was sacred to both. In one of the sand-bag emplacements into which I looked were a dozen Russian soldiers all sitting with their backs to the wall, and the majority with their arms folded across their chests, while their rifles were stacked up against the trench ready for use. Not one of these men looked as if they were hurt—they merely appeared to be asleep; and on some I could not discover any

injury. Apparently they had been killed by the force of the explosion of one of the heavy shells without having been touched by it. Another remarkable fact was the manner in which numbers of the dead had been stripped of all clothing by the explosion of the shells or the bursting of the grenades.

The task of clearing the mountain of the thousands of corpses was a heavy undertaking, and took days to accomplish; but as it was freezing hard, no ill effects resulted. Every day men from the various battalions went up the mountain and endeavoured to identify their comrades, in order that correct records might be sent to Japan. Each soldier carries a card on him, stating his name and battalion, when he goes into action; but the majority of the bodies near the crest were so smashed up that identification was out of the question. As soon as a man was identified, he was carried down the mountain and there laid out to await cremation, the surgeons cutting out each man's Adam's apple in order that it might be sent to the relatives in Japan. The Russian earthworks on the crest of Royusan had been temporarily repaired during the intervals between the attacks. Often the bodies of the dead were made to take the place of sand-bags, and across these horrid improvised walls both sides had fought with bayonet and hand-grenade.

The Russians were eventually very much demoralised after the capture of the hill, for although the summit was well within range of the western forts, they made no effort to shell the hundreds of Japanese soldiers walking about the mountain and continually exposing themselves on the skyline. To fully describe the appearance of 203 Metre Hill would take many

chapters, and no object would be served by dwelling further on its horrors.

It is seldom in warfare that an opportunity is given to soldiers to display such high qualities of steadfast courage and devotion to duty as were shown by the soldiers of Japan and Russia in the struggle for its possession. The honours must be equally divided between the two, and if success finally crowned the efforts of the Japanese, it was only because their artillery pounded the Russian works to a pulp, and fresh battalions were always ready to charge over the heaps of ruins. Those who fell, whether they be Russians or whether they be Japanese, will have a lasting monument to their memory in the mountain for the possession of which they contended. Monuments made by men are perishable, and no purpose would be served by erecting one, for around 203 Metre Hill must cling for centuries the stories and traditions of the dark days from November the 27th to December the 5th.

THE DEAD LAID OUT AT THE FOOT OF 203 METRE HILL,

After having been Identified, to await Cremation.

CHAPTER XXII.

DESTRUCTION OF THE RUSSIAN WARSHIPS.

The Japanese did not delay for a day the task of destroying the Russian warships at anchor in the harbour. It was considered more than probable that the Russians would again put to sea, and endeavour to escape while there was yet time. To a high-spirited nation like the Japanese, it seemed almost incredible that the entire squadron would choose to be shot to pieces as they lay at anchor; yet that was the course adopted by the Russians. Immediately after its capture a space was cleared on the summit of 203 Metre Hill, and a bomb-proof observation station was constructed, in which was placed a telescope. Naval officers were sent on shore to occupy this bomb-proof, which was connected by telephone to the battery of 28-centimetre howitzers, and they could thus correct the aim of each gun, and also were in a position to judge when a battleship was totally disabled.

On December 6 the bombardment commenced: that day the *Poltava* was reported struck several times, and in the evening she was listing badly. On the low neck separating 203 Metre Hill from Akasakayama the Japanese placed in position several 4·7 naval guns, and they were thus able to open a direct fire with armour-

piercing shells on the ships. The manner in which these guns were mounted was an object-lesson: they were placed right on the sky-line, and were plainly visible to the gunners in the western forts; but the bluejackets built round them casemates made of wood and sand-bags, roofed in on top until they were just as secure as if they had been behind six inches of solid steel.

It was a curious spectacle to watch the gunners shell the Russian warships, because unless you stood on the summit of Royusan, it was quite impossible to see where the shells were falling. To all appearance the gunners might have been throwing their ammunition into the sea. A large majority of the shells naturally missed their mark, but on the first two days of the bombardment sufficient got home to prove conclusively to the Russians that they must evacuate the harbour, or else see their vessels destroyed. One by one the vessels were reported to be sunk: first the *Poltava*, then the *Retvizan*, and rapidly in succession the *Pallada*, *Bayan*, *Pobieda*, and *Peresviet*. Only one captain made any effort to save his ship—Von Essen, of the *Sebastopol*. On December 9 that battleship made her way out of the harbour, and took up her anchorage under Tiger's Tail. A boom was constructed around her, and for three days she resisted the attacks of the Japanese torpedo-boat flotillas. Finally the boom was partially destroyed, and a torpedo damaged the hull and steering-gear of the ship. Seeing escape was hopeless, Von Essen that night steered his ship by her twin screws into deep water, and there scuttled her. The *Sebastopol* is never likely to fly the Japanese flag. The Japanese thought at the time that they had sunk the ships by

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THE RESULT OF THE CAPTURE OF 203 METRE HILL.

THE RUSSIAN CRUISER PALLADA STRUCK BY A 28-CENTIMETRE SHELL AS SHE LAY AT ANCHOR IN THE HARBOUR.

their shell-fire; in reality that was not the case, as was proved afterwards. The Russians scuttled them to protect them from the great 500-lb. shells. The naval officers in the bomb-proof saw that none of them could ever again put to sea. As is now known, the Russians themselves scuttled the vessels in order to protect them from the vertical fire of the 28-centimetre shells, hoping that if the fortress was relieved they would be able to salve them.

Admiral Togo himself came off the *Mikasa* and climbed up 203 Metre Hill, and made a final examination of all the vessels in the harbour. With the exception of the cruiser *Bayan*, which was lying sunk alongside the quay in the east basin, all the other warships were lying near the shore, to seek protection from the Peiyushan height, which is close to the water's edge. This mountain had hidden the fleet from the view of the Japanese when they captured Namakayama, and put them under the necessity of capturing 203 Metre Hill.

The immense importance of the achievement of the 1st and 7th Divisions must have been forcibly brought home to the gallant Togo when he stood on Royusan surrounded by the bodies of the thousands who had fallen to assist him and his fleet. In the general award of merit the Japanese Navy can receive no more praise than it deserves for what it accomplished under its famous admiral, but in the naval celebrations held in Tokio representatives of the divisions who captured Royusan should have held an honoured place, because it was they, and they alone, who were responsible for the final destruction of the Russian squadron. Without their assistance there might have been no naval review, or else a marshalling

of the mere remnants of a fleet, instead of a magnificent array of over two hundred vessels such as took up their anchorage in the Bay of Tokio. Admiral Togo and the officers who served under him would be the last to withhold from the gallant soldiers of the 1st and 7th Divisions the prize and credit which are their due.

When he was satisfied that not one of the Russian warships could ever put to sea again, Admiral Togo telegraphed to that effect to the Navy Department. Of all the news which reached Tokio during the war, and with hardly an exception it was cheerful, there was none which caused such intense joy and gave rise to such a feeling of relief as the final destruction of the Port Arthur Squadron. To accomplish that result the Japanese had attacked the fortress again and again. They had spent millions of money and sacrificed thousands of lives, at this time amounting to over 64,000 men killed and wounded. The anticipations and prayers of six months of desperate fighting, such as has seldom been seen in any war, were realised on the afternoon of December 5, when the foremost Japanese soldiers stood on the summit of Royusan. Much as the terrible loss of life on that hill is to be deplored, there can be no question that it was worth the sacrifice, and had it been necessary to suffer twice as severely, the Japanese generals would never have hesitated under the circumstances.

Among those who fell in the attack on 203 Metre Hill was General Nogi's second son, a staff officer of the 7th Division, who was shot through the head while conveying a message to the front. The General's only other son fell during the attack on Nanshan,

gallantly leading his company against the enemy's entrenchments.

The capture of 203 Metre Hill caused the Russians to abandon the line of entrenchments running from that hill to Fort Isusan. From December 5 the Japanese were in possession of the open country towards Pigeon Bay and Laoteshan, and although some fighting was required before the Russians were finally driven back to their line of permanent forts in the west, it was not of a severe character. After the capture of 203 Metre Hill the Russian line of defence was contracted to its smallest possible dimensions, and the fatal defect of Port Arthur as a fortress became evidenced. The defences are too close to the town and harbour, which can be blown to pieces by the guns of a besieging army once 203 Metre Hill has been captured.

While both armies were awaiting the result of the struggle for the possession of 203 Metre Hill, there had been an entire cessation of hostilities in the east, and hardly a Russian or Japanese gun was fired during the ten days between November 26 and December 5, except those that were engaged in bombarding 203 Metre Hill. On December 2 the Russians in Higashi Keikwansan hoisted a white flag, and an officer came out of the fort and asked to see a Japanese staff officer. His request was telephoned through to headquarters, and permission was received from General Nogi, who was in the west, for a Japanese officer to meet the Russian and find out what he wanted. A staff officer of the 11th Division then advanced, and the Russian stated that he wished to give the Japanese the opportunity of receiving their wounded who had fallen during the attack of November 26, because

they (the Russians) could not look after them. He also wished to arrange for the burial of the dead who lay scattered about on Higashi Keikwansan. The Russians wanted a reply by 10 A.M. that morning, but as that could not be managed, they said they would come back at 10 A.M. on the following morning. General Nogi was perfectly willing to consent to this arrangement, his only stipulation being that there should be no cessation of hostilities in the west, which meant that the Japanese would continue to attack 203 Metre Hill. On December 3 the white flag was again hoisted, and for three hours, from 12 P.M. to 3 P.M., the task of collecting the wounded and burying the dead was carried on. This was the first time since the commencement of the siege that the officers of the hostile armies had had an opportunity of meeting one another in a friendly manner: there was naturally great interest attached to this armistice. The scene on Higashi Keikwansan between the Russian and Japanese lines was indeed a remarkable one. A number of Russian officers came out of their trenches, and were met by Japanese officers from the 11th Division. Each side provided delicacies with which to entertain the other. The Japanese brought bottles of brandy, saki, beer, and other provisions, and I suppose they naturally expected the Russians would be grateful for these luxuries after the privation of the siege. But the Russian was determined not to appear in any way the worse fed of the two, and the officers brought with them to the meeting bottles of claret, champagne, and brandy, and also a variety of cakes. Thus equipped, the enemies met in friendly concourse for three hours, while the stretcher-bearers were collecting the wounded and burying the

dead. Eight miles to the west was 203 Metre Hill, from which the booming of cannon and the spluttering of rifle-fire never ceased, as the Japanese advanced again and again to the attack, only to be driven back by the stubborn infantry who lined the crest. Both Russian and Japanese were much affected by this remarkable gathering, and could not refrain from making allusions to the struggle waging in the west. "You will never capture 203 Metre Hill," said one officer to a Japanese captain. "We will purchase it with blood," was the reply of the latter. This spirited response aroused applause from the Russians. A certain Professor Shiba, who had been with General Nogi's staff for a considerable period, was so overcome by his feelings that he thought fit to make a speech. He delivered his oration in Japanese, and it was translated into Russian. "Such a gathering as this," he said, "could only take place among brave opponents. Why should the Japanese and the Russians be enemies? It is necessary, no doubt, to fight this war to a conclusion, but as soon as it is over Russia and Japan can unite, and then they will be so powerful that between them they could divide the whole world." The views expressed by the gallant Professor Shiba were received with loud shouts of "Ja, ja" (Yes, yes) from the Russians. Glasses were then filled, and both sides drank each other's health. The Russians stated that they would be unable to withstand two more assaults such as that of November 26. They said also that the men were now practically living on nothing but bread, and that they received donkey's flesh and horse-flesh but once a-week. Just before 3 o'clock the officers on the hillside shook hands and parted, the Japanese expressing a hope that they would shortly meet their

gallant opponents again, and the Russians replying that they were afraid a considerable period would yet elapse. The white flags were then taken down, and the infantry commenced to snipe at one another across the intervening ground. This speech of Professor Shiba, in which he suggested that Russia and Japan should divide the whole world, aroused considerable indignation among foreigners with the Japanese army. It was certainly unchivalrous of the professor to forget, in his division of the world, the ally of his country, who had so successfully kept the ring while she drove back the aggressor, whom the professor wished to turn into a partner. Complaints were made at headquarters of the tone of the professor's speech. The staff officers, however, did not take it seriously, nor did we, for that matter; they laughed at the professor, said he was not there officially, and that anyway they would postpone the division of the world between themselves and Russia until after they had taken 203 Metre Hill, destroyed the fleet, and captured the fortress.

The private soldiers, in the latter stages of the siege, found themselves in such close proximity to one another that, in order to while away the weary winter hours when they were not engaged in fighting, they would open up communication with their enemy and exchange presents of packages of cigarettes and cigars. One night a Japanese soldier was sitting in his trench outside Nirusan when a stone came over and hit him on the head. He picked up the stone, when a letter was found attached to it, which, on being opened, revealed a telegram addressed to a lady in Russia. The letter was a request from a Russian officer that this telegram might be sent to his mother in Russia, stating that he was perfectly well, and was hoping to come

unscathed through the siege. Inside the envelope was ten roubles to cover the cost of the cable. Ten roubles was, however, not sufficient, and fifteen more yen was necessary to make up the proper amount. The Japanese officers and soldiers outside Nirusan subscribed the other fifteen yen amongst themselves and sent the telegram to headquarters, where it was forwarded to Russia. On the following night they flung back a letter into Nirusan stating what they had done, and also mentioning the fact that they had been obliged to pay fifteen yen overcharge. A little later the Russian flung back another letter, in which he thanked them for carrying out his request, apologised for not enclosing enough money, and returned the extra fifteen yen. Thus the whole incident was kept on a purely commercial basis; but how strange it all seems, for here you have men who send telegrams to oblige their opponents, and a few days later the Japanese capture the position by assault, and bayonet almost every one inside it, including probably the officer for whom they had despatched the wire.

The women and children inside Port Arthur came unharmed through the siege almost without exception. Only one woman was killed, and she brought her fate upon herself; but her devotion and gallantry will long live in records of brave deeds. Her lover was taken from Siberia to Port Arthur with his regiment, and, in order not to be separated from him, this peasant woman followed him from the north, borrowed a uniform, became enrolled in the ranks, and fought by his side during the siege. Finally, after taking part in many of the severest engagements, and manfully shooting day after day over rows of sand-bags at the enemies of her country, this heroine was killed by a shell in

the North Keikwansan Fort. When the Japanese captured this position and interred the dead, the surgeons were much puzzled by the discovery of an arm which obviously was that of a woman. Conjecture was rife as to whom it could have belonged, and for some time it was thought that the wife of the commandant of the fort, who had been in the habit of visiting her husband while he was on duty, which was known from information given by prisoners, had been killed. This, however, was not the case, as was proved after the capitulation. The arm, therefore, in all probability belonged to this Russian peasant. Since the termination of the siege I have seen a letter written by a Russian inside Port Arthur describing her heroic exploits, and a photograph of her taken while she fought in the trenches.

The weather, except for occasional days of extreme cold, remained fine up to the end of October; but then winter set in in earnest, and the Japanese army made their preparations against the advent of the cold. I had often wondered how they were going to quarter their troops and their thousands of horses when the snow was on the ground. But the question was soon settled when they commenced to construct their winter dwellings. During the summer months the troops had been encamped on the sides of the hills, which were cut in terraces so that a large number of men could be concentrated on a very small space of ground. On these terraces the soldiers erected wigwams out of waterproof sheets, blankets, and the boughs of trees, and also old rice sacks, which were very useful. They thus made themselves perfectly comfortable as long as the weather remained warm; but it would have been quite impossible to sleep on the bleak hillsides when

the snow set in and the mistral blew from the north. Therefore, on the approach of winter they dug out the ground at the foot of the hill to a depth of about 3 feet, and the earth excavated was thrown up on the outside. The exterior was plastered all over with mud, which made it perfectly waterproof and wind-proof. The only entrance to these dwellings was a door below the ground-level, which prevented the wind rushing in every time some one went in or out. The roof was made of boughs of trees and sacking, and, like the walls, plastered all over with mud, which became very hard in the cold weather. Nevertheless, the exterior had to be taken great care of, and frequently to be renewed. In one corner a charcoal fire was lighted on the ground, and the smoke passed up through a hole in the roof, in which a bit of piping was stuck to form a chimney. The only unpleasant thing was the smoke, which, if the wind happened to be in the wrong direction, would sometimes blow down the chimney and almost suffocate you. Wood was very scarce, and charcoal was brought over from Japan in large quantities and supplied to the troops. Very often the interior was so warm with the number of people crowded in the inside that a fire was unnecessary, and a little brazier filled with charcoal was kept burning instead. On the brazier an old can or kettle was continually refilled with water, so that at any moment of the day the inmates could have tea. The walls of these winter palaces were lined with mats or sacking, and kept scrupulously clean. On the floor, which was of bare earth and frequently swept, were laid the blankets of the occupants, and on these they reclined during the day or slept during the night. Every one of the

Japanese camps round Port Arthur was transformed in this manner from above-ground to under-ground, and during the winter you saw the curious spectacle of 100,000 men housed like rabbits. When the snow fell thickly the dug-outs became completely covered in, and when the occupants awoke in the morning they frequently found themselves snowed up, and were obliged to dig a passage from their doorway to the ground-level. On some days one might walk for miles and not see a soldier or a horse, for the Japanese do not love the cold, and did not appear in the winter on the outside of their huts except when absolutely necessary. If a stranger had come up to the front and walked about in the besiegers' lines, he could not have known he was in the midst of an army of 100,000 men. Shelters for the horses were constructed in the same manner as for the men, only not of such an elaborate and well-finished character. These unfortunate animals were thus kept from perishing in the extreme cold, which they certainly would have done had they been left above ground. The soldiers on duty in the trenches were not able to live in this comfortable manner; they were obliged to huddle together for warmth, and do without fires. They stretched their blankets across the top of the trenches, and thus provided themselves with some cover, but their sufferings during the long winter nights must have been great. The only time I ever recollect not hearing the sound of firing coming from the front trenches was on these very cold days, when the soldiers of both armies preferred to remain huddled together in their trenches for warmth, and mutually ceased to molest one another.

One of the most noticeable facts connected with the siege of Port Arthur was the ignorance shown

by the Japanese as regards the numbers of the garrison. The reputation of their Intelligence Department stands high, but I am inclined to think that it has been over-estimated all through the war. It seems incredible that the Japanese, able as they were to control the Chinese population, and with numerous spies amongst their own men ready to risk their lives, could not learn accurately, or even approximately, previous to the commencement of the siege, the number of their opponents inside the fortress. The garrison, omitting the sailors, numbered over 40,000 combatants; yet as early as August and September the Japanese Headquarters Staff only placed the total at 15,000 effective combatants. In October, after the capture of Hachimachayama, and the screens of Nirusan and Shojusan, at a time when prospects looked particularly bright, the garrison fell to about 9000 men. After the ghastly failure of October 30, it went up with a bound to 16,000. It then gradually fell again to about 12,000 previous to the assault of November 26. After that assault it rose to anything between 20,000 and 30,000. After the capture of 203 Metre Hill the number again fell to about 12,000. When North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan were captured, the Staff stated that about 8000 or 9000 half-starved war-sick men occupied the broken line of defence.

If the Japanese were badly mistaken in their estimate of the number of the Russians in Port Arthur, Colonel Reiss, Stoessel's Chief of Staff, was still more so. At the time of the capitulation he made the extraordinary statement that only 4000 men were fit to march out as prisoners of war; the remainder were either sick or wounded in hospital

On the very next day 800 officers and 22,000 men, not including sailors, answered the ration call, taxing the resources of the Japanese to the utmost. This total did not include 13,000 sick and wounded in hospital.

The Japanese are far more skilful at concealing the truth about their own army than in learning facts about their opponents. The Russians succeeded in confusing the Japanese by their slipshod methods and lack of precautions far more effectively than if they had systematically set to work to cover every movement with secrecy. It was the old case of Bismarck's "Honest Broker" over again. The Japanese possess a wonderful facility for concealing the true numbers of their forces. Had I been asked at any stage of the siege how many soldiers were around Port Arthur, I could not have given an even approximate estimate. I knew the various divisions, brigades, and regiments, but when it came to stating their numbers I could only have quoted the peace strength. During war-time the size of the commands expands beyond all calculation.

At the termination of the siege, when there was no further object to be served in concealing the truth, I was officially informed that 97,000 men were in camps round the fortress, and that another 20,000 were scattered over the peninsula or at Dalny.

1 North front where the Japanese attacked. 2 Taikosan. x The cross marks the spot where General Kondrachenko was killed.

THE NORTH KEIKWANSAN FORT, CAPTURED DECEMBER 18, 1904.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE FALL OF NORTH KEIKWANSAN AND NIRUSAN.

The fall of 203 Metre Hill caused the Russians to abandon, almost without opposition, a line of entrenchments which stretched from the captured hill to the shores of Pigeon Bay. They continued, however, to hold certain advance positions in front of the western section of defences, and it became necessary to drive them from these before any saps could be pushed against the forts.

On December 7, the 7th Division attacked the most forward Russian position before daybreak, and captured it after a feeble resistance. At the same hour on December 16, the 7th Division attacked the second position taken up by the enemy, and were again successful. On December 17, the insatiable 7th finally drove the Russians within the shelter of their inner line. A small party of Russians held out for a few days in an isolated position close to Pigeon Bay, but they were quickly disposed of. From December 18 the Japanese were in occupation of the open plain extending from 203 Metre Hill in the north to Laoteshan in the south, and to Pigeon Bay in the west. On December 16, General Stoessel sent a written complaint to General Nogi that the

Japanese artillery were bombarding the hospitals in Port Arthur. General Nogi replied that the guns had never purposely been trained on the hospitals, but so many buildings in both the Old and New Towns flew the Red Cross flag, that it was hard to distinguish between those used for military and those used for hospital purposes. Several conferences were held, and in the end the Japanese gave a conditional promise not to range their guns on the hospitals, provided they were separated from the military depots and other buildings used for warlike purposes. At the termination of the siege only one hospital was found to have been struck by a shell.

On December 18 the final stage of the siege was ushered in by the blowing up of the escarpment of the North Keikwansan Fort, and the subsequent capture of that position by assault. The operations extending from December 18 up to the fall of Port Arthur at 4 P.M. on New Year's day were the fourth series of attacks delivered on the eastern section of the fortifications during the siege. The first series was from August 18 to the repulse of the Japanese from Bodai on the night of August 23; the second, the assault of October 30 on the Keikwansan group of forts; the third, the assault of November 26; the fourth and last, the series I am about to describe.

The operations in December varied very materially from any which had preceded them. For the first time in the course of the five months which the Japanese had spent in hammering at the fortress, the infantry were given a fair chance of gaining a decisive success, and the result shows how well they took advantage of it. The assaults of December were the first which would have been considered justifiable

by a European commander. Up to December a European army would have been kept in the trenches, and the only active operations would have consisted in sapping and mining against the forts until a point had been reached suitable for blowing up the positions, and assaulting through the breaches thus made. The Japanese only reached this stage in the middle of December, and immediately they attacked under normal or legitimate conditions for such assaults, they were successful. They had not, however, been content to wait until the right moment arrived. They had sapped and mined without intermission throughout the siege; but the slowness of the process did not please them, and on three occasions they broke bounds and delivered attacks, trusting to the extraordinary devotion and bravery of their infantry to overcome all obstacles, and to do away with the necessity of sitting for months before the fortress until the engineers had brought victory within reasonable grasp.

The lives lost in August, October, and November were for the most part thrown away to absolutely no purpose, for exactly the same result would have been obtained if no assaults had been delivered until the middle of December. The fortress would have fallen on the same date, and thousands of lives might have been saved. It took the Japanese generals a long time to learn a lesson which other commanders have well understood, namely, that given time and money, the engineer must always have the advantage over numbers and bravery. Had the Japanese Commander-in-Chief taken up the most elementary book on engineering, and given his generals instructions to follow out its precepts, he could have captured Port Arthur in the same time with far less trouble and cost. The

engineering manual lays down clearly the necessary steps in besieging a fortress. First, it is necessary to find a suitable position for your saps to debouch from. That position the Japanese had in the Divisional Ridge. Secondly, it is necessary to connect the heads of the various saps together. This the Japanese did; for the Suishien valley contained five complete lines of parallels. Thirdly, when you have reached a point where further progress above ground is impossible, you must mine. This again the Japanese carried out to the letter. Fourthly, you must blow up the counterscarp galleries of the forts in order to obtain possession of the ditch. Fifthly, you must continue the galleries across the ditch, under the escarpment, and endeavour to blow it up. When you have blown up the escarpment, you may attempt an assault with fair hope of success—provided, of course, you do not consider it wiser to proceed still further by mining. All these things, which the merest tyro can understand, when eventually carried out by the Japanese, resulted in the capture, in December, of the three strongest positions along the line. The mistake they made was that in their extreme eagerness they always attacked one stage in front of their engineering operations. In August they delivered an assault across the open Suishien valley before they had constructed their saps and parallels up to the foot of the enemy's positions. On October 30 they assaulted the Keikwansan position with no hope of success, because the engineering operations were not sufficiently advanced; at the same time leaving other forts which were being sapped against unmolested. On November 26 they assaulted three permanent works, after they had only captured or blown up the counterscarp and caponiere galleries, and

without having attempted to blow up the escarpments. The result of that attack I have already described. In criticising the premature attempts to capture Port Arthur, exception must of course be made to the assaults on positions which it was necessary to take before the besiegers' lines could approach the permanent chain of works. Thus it was essential to take Fort Kouropatkin, the redoubts to the south of the village of Suishien, the screen of Nirusan, and Hachimachayama. It was also necessary to occupy the outlying positions in the west, Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill.

After the disastrous attempt to capture North Keikwansan Fort on November 26, the Japanese engineers set to work to drive galleries under the ditch. They constructed two main shafts under the north wall of the escarpment to a length of 40 feet. A ton of dynamite and gun-cotton was stored in the mines. This was expeditiously carried out, and by December 18 the mines were ready to be exploded. On the evening of December 17 I was informed that they would be fired at 2 P.M. on the following day, and that immediately the result of the explosion was determined, the infantry would be ordered to attack. The most suitable position from which to see the explosion was the mountain of Taikosan. At noon on the 18th I made my way to the foot of this position, where there were already assembled a great number of Japanese officers and men who had nothing special to do, and had come out to see the great explosion. The rumour of the immense upheaval which might be expected had spread throughout the army, and even the phlegmatic feelings of the Japanese were aroused by this new method of procedure. The snow

had fallen heavily throughout the previous week, and on the 18th the ground was covered with it. The day was fine and clear, but it was freezing hard, and the snow lay on the ground without melting. When we commenced to climb Taikosan we found it almost impossible to reach the summit of the mountain, so slippery was the pathway. There must have been nearly a thousand Japanese officers and men on and around the mountain, waiting to see the result of the explosion.

The Japanese are very punctual in their military operations, and as the hands of the clock drew near the appointed hour, the excitement among the spectators was intense. Exactly at 2.30 an immense grey cloud rose above the escarpment of North Keikwansan, completely hiding the fort from view. This was followed by a dull muffled roar, as the sound of the explosion reached us on the mountain. There was no wind, and the smoke did not disperse, but hung above the fort for several minutes, hiding it from view. Then, just as we expected to see the infantry rush to the breach, a second mine was exploded, almost on the same spot as the previous one. Another immense cloud of smoke forced its way up through the lighter cloud left by the first explosion, and again the dull roar reached us. The combined clouds of smoke took several minutes to clear away, and when the fort again emerged into the light there was a marked change in its appearance. On the north-west angle, where had formerly stood the high yellow-coloured escarpment, a V-shaped crater lay exposed to full view. Through this hollow hundreds of black-coated figures were rushing to the attack. The Japanese infantry had wasted no time; hardly had the

smoke lifted before they were in the breach, and endeavouring to seize the fort. They were not, however, destined to meet with much success. The majority of the Russians in the interior of the fort had been hiding in the barrack at the back, and, although they had lost many men by these two tremendous upheavals, the survivors quickly recovered from their panic. From the machine-gun line they plied the Japanese soldiers with hand-grenades and rifle-fire, while the artillery on the surrounding hills concentrated a tremendous fire of shrapnel on the breach.

The Japanese soldiers, who consisted of the 22nd Regiment, were evidently not prepared for such a warm reception. I think they, in common with almost every one else who witnessed the explosion, anticipated that the Russian garrison in the interior of the fort would have been absolutely destroyed. This was, however, far from the case. The first explosion did little damage to the escarpment, for its force was expended towards the counterscarp galleries, and the Japanese soldiers, waiting in the tunnel leading to the galleries, suffered severely from its effects. The great weight of the concrete of the escarpment caused this disaster, and over fifty Japanese soldiers were killed or stunned. The force of the second explosion was expended in the right direction, and the V-shaped crater was the result. When the smoke of the two explosions had rolled away, and the damage inflicted lay exposed to view, the 22nd Regiment was ordered to advance. The men rushed over the heaps of ruins in gallant manner, but when they came to the breach-head they found that in order to gain the interior of the fort there was a drop of nearly

twelve feet. Inside they could see the Russian infantry waiting for them, entrenched behind the wire-entanglement and in the barrack at the back. This was too much for the 22nd Regiment, who lay down in the breach and advanced no farther. Their losses would probably have been far less had they immediately rushed the fort, without hesitation. For, although they might have suffered many casualties, they would not have been exposed for several hours to the fire of the Russian guns, as was the case while they lay in the breach.

The 22nd Regiment were not to be blamed for their failure on this occasion. They were one of the original regiments of General Nogi's army, and they had taken part in almost every attack since the commencement of the siege. No success had, so far, attended their efforts, and no doubt, on the afternoon of December 18, the recollection of their previous disasters and heavy losses was fresh in the memory of the survivors.

The situation remained unchanged until shortly before 7 P.M. General Samejima, who had taken over the command of the 11th Division after Tsuchiya was wounded, went forward into the breach at 7 o'clock to examine the condition of affairs. He saw the men lying down in the breach-head, and thought they were all either killed or wounded. His surprise was great, and his wrath still greater, when he discovered among the killed and wounded a large number of men who were unhurt, and who declined to advance. The General addressed the shamefaced soldiers. "I have no use," he said, "for soldiers who refuse to advance when ordered to. You can go back to your line, and I will bring up fresh troops

to take the fort." This exhortation was meant to arouse the enthusiasm of the soldiers, and to induce them to make a fresh attack; but it did not have that result. The survivors of the 22nd, sick of war and discouraged by their losses, took the General at his word, cleared out of the breach, and returned to their trenches. Samejima then called upon two companies of the 38th Regiment. These men belonged to the Kobi Reserve; most of them were veterans, and they had not had much opportunity of distinguishing themselves up to that time. Two companies of these brave men advanced to the top of the breach, singing. A gallant captain, Yawamoto, was the first to jump into the interior of the fort, and was immediately followed by his men. The Russians were driven from behind the wire-entanglement into the concrete barrack, and there they made their last desperate stand.

Throughout the afternoon the Japanese artillery had concentrated their fire on the back of the fort, and had succeeded in destroying the little wooden bridge which led over the ditch to the hills behind. There was no underground retreat from the fort, and the escape of the Russians was therefore cut off. They had no alternative but to die fighting, for no quarter was asked or given. The Japanese troops had their blood up, and after the immense number of men they had lost before the North Keikwansan Fort in the course of the siege, they were not to be denied the satisfaction of taking a perfectly legitimate revenge on the garrison once they had gained the interior. There was no impartial testimony as to what occurred inside the fort between the hours of 7 P.M. and 2 A.M. on the following morning, when

the last of the Russians was finally bayoneted. The only eye-witnesses are those who participated in the battue, and they answered your inquiries with a smile of requited hope and satisfaction. A single prisoner was taken,—the usual one, who was always preserved after each attack to give information as to the condition of Port Arthur. This man stated that the Russian garrison numbered 300 men, 25 of whom succeeded in making their escape; every one of the others was shot or bayoneted. The Japanese losses were heavy—over 100 killed, and 483 officers and men wounded.

The capture of North Keikwansan Fort was a great achievement for the Japanese arms, and aroused the enthusiasm of the soldiers to a high degree. It must be remembered that this was really the first permanent fort taken during the siege, and the success came just at the moment when it was most needed. The permanent positions had been assaulted so many times, that a belief had sprung up in the ranks of the soldiers that they could never be taken. The fall of North Keikwansan proved that, with due preparation, even the permanent forts could be captured in a few hours. The loss, considering the result obtained, was not severe, and augured well for the success of similar operations against the other permanent positions. The twenty Russians who made their escape, exploded mines before retiring. The Japanese were very much afraid that the Russians might have left mines under the fort, and would attempt to blow it up after its capture. This indeed proved to be the case; but luckily the engineers discovered their presence, and were able to destroy them before they could be exploded.

A few days elapsed before any one was allowed to enter North Keikwansan. During this time the dead were removed from the interior, and either buried or cremated. On December 24 I went down to the 11th Division, lunched with General Samejima, and was taken forward to visit the fort. The destruction caused by the bombardments, and finally by the explosion, was so great that it was quite impossible to trace the original lines on which the fort had been constructed. The interior presented a scene of terrible confusion. Masses of concrete, rubbish, sand, earth, stones, old uniforms, broken guns, rifles, cooking-utensils, empty shells, fragments of iron and steel, and *débris* of every description, covered the ground. At the back the solid concrete barrack alone remained, and even this had been partially destroyed. This barrack was in two storeys, and at one point a 28-centimetre shell had come right through the roof. On December 15 General Kondrachenko and his staff were inside North Keikwansan superintending some repairs. They were sitting in the concrete barrack, right underneath the hole which had been temporarily repaired, when another 28-centimetre shell came through the same spot. It burst in the interior of the barrack, killing Kondrachenko and eight other officers who were talking with him. This was the greatest misfortune Russia could have suffered, for on the death of that gallant and popular man the spirit of resistance fled from the garrison.

Inside the barrack, where the Russians had lived during the siege, was a strange collection of articles. There were uniforms, packs of cards, loaves of bread, and musical instruments, including a concertina. I shall never forget the ghastly appearance of the

Japanese soldiers holding the fort. No men ever showed plainer signs of suffering from an attack of nerves. Since the capture of the position they had lived in hourly fear of having it blown up under their feet. Although they had unearthed two mines, and cut the wires, they had no guarantee that others did not exist elsewhere. They were afraid that the simple action of picking up any one of the articles lying round in the barrack might cause an explosion, and in consequence everything remained just as the Russians had left it. I did not know of this, and picked up the concertina, which was lying in one corner of the barrack. The officers and men near by gave a yell when they saw me touch it, and I dropped it immediately. Fortunately no mine exploded. The harmless nature of this musical instrument left lying in a corner of the fort had evidently aroused their suspicion. A Japanese sentry, when he saw me pick up the concertina, was so nervous that he immediately seized the camera out of the hand of my friend Mr Rosenthal and dashed it to the ground, evidently thinking that it might be connected with some mine. The engineers were busy carefully digging everywhere to discover mines, and it was not until this work had been thoroughly carried out that the interior of the fort was cleared up. Close to the barrack was the kitchen, also made of solid concrete, and containing some great bronze cauldrons in which the soldiers cooked. Between the barrack and the kitchen was a hand-lift, leading down to a subterranean passage in which the ammunition was stored. The destruction of the interior had been so complete that these underground passages had been almost completely filled in with rubbish.

THE DITCH AND ESCARPMENT OF FORT NIRUSAN.

An interval of nearly two weeks was allowed to elapse before the Japanese again essayed the feat of blowing up another of the permanent forts. Two mine-shafts were run under the escarpment of Nirusan to a distance of 50 feet. Branch tunnels were constructed, and five mines placed in position. Two tons of dynamite and gun-cotton was the charge. On Christmas Day Major Yamoaka informed me, at a luncheon given by the military attachés, that in a few days' time the mines under Nirusan would be ready to be fired. On December 27, when I visited headquarters, I learned that at 10 o'clock on the following morning the attempt to take the fort would be made. The weather during the past two weeks had been very cold, and hardly a horse or a man had been seen above ground throughout this period. The Japanese remained buried in their underground shelters; and the soldiers in the trenches, huddling together for warmth, rarely fired a shot, or in any way molested their opponents. Even the gunners seemed to feel the atmospheric conditions so keenly that they refrained from any bombardment.

This interval between December 18 and December 28 is almost the only time I can recollect throughout the siege when there was practically no gun-fire. December 28 was an unpleasant day; an icy wind blew from the north, and the sun was obscured by misty clouds. The temperature was abnormally low, and the conditions on the whole were about as miserable as could be wished. Punctually at 10 A.M. the first mine placed under the north face of Nirusan was exploded. The smoke failed to rise, and hid the front of the fort from view; then up the denser cloud of a second explosion slowly forced

its way through the first. The Japanese artillery opened fire on the Russian forts, keeping the men in the trenches on the *qui vive*, to make them believe a general attack was to follow. Even the roar of the great howitzers sounded muffled and depressed in the strangely heavy and damp air. There was none of that crispness of sound so apparent on the keen frosty afternoon of the 18th.

When the smoke finally rolled away, the centre of the escarpment of Nirusan had sunk considerably; and through the hollow thus created a number of black-coated figures were discovered to view, forcing their way over the heaps of *débris*. The Russian guns were concentrated on the breach; for the explosion of the mines had blown down a corner of the west side of the escarpment, and exposed the assaulting party to the fire of the western forts — especially Shiyoanchisan and Isusan. This, however, did not cause any hesitation among the Japanese soldiers, who attacked with the greatest dash and determination. A number of men rushed the breach and obtained a foothold on the ruined escarpment. The Russians, to the number of 250, who had been holding the banquette at the time of the explosion were all killed. A second party of Japanese immediately commenced to build a wall of sand-bags up to the breach-head, to protect the soldiers holding it from the fire of the western fort. It subsequently transpired that Nirusan was defended by 500 men of the 26th, East Siberian Sharpshooters, and of this number half were killed by the first explosion — a truly effective result.

A glance at the plan of Fort Nirusan will show that it is built on somewhat different lines to North

Keikwansan Fort, and that there is a second line of defence constructed across the centre of the fort, behind which the big guns had been mounted in solid concrete emplacements. After the capture of the escarpment the Japanese infantry were called off for a time, while investigations were made of the interior of the fort. Small patrol parties and individual soldiers were sent forward over the masses of stones and rubbish to reconnoitre the obstacle in front. They reported to General Oshima, the commander of the 9th Division, who had taken up his position in the screen of Nirusan, that the interior line of defence in the centre of the fort was held by the survivors of the Russian garrison. General Oshima allowed the artillery to bombard the fort for several hours. At 4 P.M. he let loose the 36th and 19th Regiments on the interior of the fort. Charging side by side in friendly rivalry, this mass of soldiers, to the number of over 2000, simply swept everything before them, and, heedless of losses, tumbled over one another in their frantic exertions to be the first in possession of the line of heavy guns. The Russians fought with the greatest courage, but could not withstand this torrent of furious men. So they retired from the line of big guns into the concrete barrack and kitchen at the back of the fort. From 6 P.M. in the afternoon to 3 A.M. on the following morning they maintained themselves among the underground passages.

The stairway leading from the centre of the fort underground to the barrack was the scene of a horrible struggle. The Japanese, cold, infuriated, and determined to finish off their opponents, poured down it and encountered the equally determined

Russians at the foot of the stairway. The Russians, shooting up the stairs, kept back the Japanese for a considerable time, but finally they were driven round the corner at the bottom into the barrack, followed by the victorious Japanese. Another desperate fight took place in the interior; many of the Russians climbed through the windows of the barrack into the ditch at the back of the fort. From the ditch a ladder led up to the ground-level, and over 150 men escaped in this manner to the shelter of the hills behind. The remainder, unable to escape, retreated from the barrack into the kitchen, and there made their final stand. Hardly a man except those who had escaped out at the back survived the night's butchery. Three wounded alone remained on the following day, to relate the usual story of the early capitulation of the fortress.

The loss of Nirusan rendered the Russians desperate, and just before dawn on the 29th an attempt was made to recapture the fort from the hills behind. Two parties of Russians gained the ditch in rear of the fort, and endeavoured to storm the barrack, which was occupied in force by the Japanese infantry. The attack was foredoomed to failure; it could only have succeeded as a complete surprise, and the Japanese were not to be taken off their guard. Those of the Russians who were not killed were speedily forced to retire.

The Japanese paid heavily for their success; over 1000 men were killed or wounded in the interior of Nirusan. The Russian garrison only amounted to 500 men in all, so they at least had the satisfaction of knowing that two of their opponents had fallen for each one of the defenders of the fort. Among

the spoils of the fort were four siege-guns, seven field-guns, and thirty 37-millimetre guns.

The assault and capture of Nirusan was splendidly conceived, and carried out with the utmost vigour by the invincible 9th Division. Lieutenant Hori, General Oshima's aide-de-camp, told me afterwards that his general was determined to take the fort. On the morning of the attack he had a hot bath, said good-bye to his friends, settled his affairs, and went forward into the screen of Fort Nirusan, there to watch the attack. Had there been any hesitation on the part of the soldiers, General Oshima was determined to go forward himself into the breach and lead his men to the assault. Had the attack failed, the General desired to perish with the soldiers amidst the ruins of the Russian position, which had cost his division so many lives during the siege. Fortunately, Oshima was not obliged to carry out his desperate intention. The explosion was successful, the soldiers attacked in the most gallant manner, and Oshima's valuable life was preserved, to serve his country once again at the battle of Mukden.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FINAL OPERATIONS.

The 29th and 30th December passed quietly. The weather had moderated, and on the 31st it became beautifully fine and clear; the sun shone forth in a manner almost summer-like. The only events worth recording on those days were the frequent explosions in Port Arthur; the dull sound of the reports just reached the Japanese lines, and great clouds of smoke rose above the fortifications. Such incidents should have warned us that the end was approaching, but we had been disappointed so often that no one attached great importance to them.

On the evening of December 31 the usual warning message, the precursor of some great operation, arrived from headquarters. It merely stated that Shojusan would be blown up at 10 A.M. on the following morning. Events were progressing with a rapidity almost startling after the months of heart-breaking delays and repulses, and the Russians were to be given no respite once success had smiled on the Japanese arms. The last days of the garrison in Shojusan were as unpleasant as men ever had to face. On December 18 the soldiers in that position had seen the North Keikwansan Fort razed to the ground by a terrible

×1 Marks the position of the mine under the escarpment. ×2 The position of the mine under the centre of the fort.

Marked on the photograph are the western group of forts, showing their relative position to one another.

THE FORT OF SHOJUSAN, CAPTURED DECEMBER 31, 1904.

upheaval, which had destroyed part of the garrison. On December 28 they had witnessed on Nirusan, at a distance of only 400 yards, 250 of their comrades blown sky-high, and the subsequent infantry assault. Now it was evident to all that Shojusan must be the next fort to be dealt with in this drastic manner. Each explosion had been of a more deadly character than the preceding one. The engineers profited by their experiences, and knew to a nicety the amount of gun-cotton necessary to bring about a successful result. The Russians in Shojusan might expect at any moment to find themselves blown to bits, or buried beneath masses of rock and concrete, —a truly pleasant outlook! It is never comforting to feel that a relentless enemy is slowly mining his way beneath your house, and filling the cavity thus created with thousands of pounds of high explosives. But this was the position of the unfortunate garrison of the Pine Tree Fort. Their worst surmises as to the nature of their end were destined to be realised.

The Japanese engineers competed in friendly rivalry for the honour of inflicting the most damage on the enemy. The sapper who tunnelled against Shojusan placed a mine beneath the escarpment on the north front. He was not content, however, to rest on this performance. He determined to outdo his comrades. Whereas they had been content to breach the escarpment, and leave it to the infantry to assault the positions, he wished to destroy the entire Russian garrison by one immense explosion. In order to accomplish his purpose, he tunnelled his way right under the centre of the fort, estimated that the head of the gallery was under the concrete barrack in which the garrison found shelter from the artillery-fire when

not engaged in repelling an assault, and there placed a second mine.

At 10 A.M. on the morning of December 31 the mine under the north escarpment of Shojusan was exploded. The Russian infantry, who had been kept well at the back of the fort in anticipation of the escarpment being blown up, immediately left the shelter of the barrack and rushed forward to repel the expected infantry assault. As they passed out of the barrack, and were rushing across the fort, to the number of about 550 men, the Japanese fired their second mine. The result was instantaneous. Almost the entire Russian garrison were buried amid the concrete of the barrack and the heaps of rock and earth thrown up by the explosion. The Japanese infantry immediately assaulted the breach caused by the first explosion. The ascent was so steep that they were obliged to place two scaling-ladders in the breach before they could enter the fort. When they reached the crest they were met by a feeble resistance from the survivors of the Russian garrison, who numbered only about 100. The remainder of the 550 men who held Shojusan had perished in the ruins of the fort.

The Russian gunners on the western forts and from the surrounding hills concentrated a heavy artillery-fire on the breach of Shojusan, and the Japanese infantry suffered considerable loss. Nevertheless their success was assured. The fighting, such as it was, lasted for only one hour, until 11 A.M., when the survivors of the Russian garrison hoisted the white flag and became prisoners of war.

Immediately the fort was taken, the Russians concentrated an artillery-fire on it from every avail-

able position, and the greater number of the Japanese casualties, which only totalled about 150 in all, were caused by this shell-fire following the capture of Shojusan. The Russian gunners were not content to shell Shojusan alone; they possessed a spite against the garrisons of other captured works, and Nirusan was likewise subjected to a heavy fire. The Japanese guns, nothing loth to take part in the duel, also replied, and throughout the day this encounter between the heavy ordnance, almost the last of the siege, was continued. It was an exhilarating sight to watch the Japanese engineers in the breach of Shojusan. So heavy was the shell-fire concentrated on the breach from the western group of forts, that it was necessary to construct a double row of sand-bags to enable the infantry to pass into the fort from their trenches. The manner in which these working-parties set about their task was worthy of all praise. They absolutely disregarded the shell-fire concentrated on them, and handled the sand-bags, which were passed up from the trenches in the rear, as if on parade. The weather was so beautiful and warm that the soldiers had discarded their greatcoats, and many were working in their shirt-sleeves.

The enthusiasm among the Japanese soldiers was astonishing, and was good to see. For many weeks there had been something akin to an atmosphere of depression which pervaded the army; every man had done his best, but the results had been disappointing, and quite out of proportion to the losses entailed. Now all was changed. In a space of two weeks the three most formidable permanent forts had been captured, and the price paid for this success was

under 2000 men killed and wounded. The intoxication of victory was in the air, and caused every one to forget the past and to look forward with the greatest confidence to an early termination of the siege. You read victory in the faces of the soldiers in the front lines. Their step was light and their air jaunty and free from that look of sullen determination which had characterised the army a short time previously.

Astonishing also was the vitality engendered by success. Desperately wounded men walked back to the hospitals without aid, and when their wounds had been dressed, passed on to the field-hospitals in the rear. On the day Shojusan was captured I was down at the village of Suishien watching the attack. One man shot in the head, and whose right arm had been smashed to pieces by a shell, walked to the dressing-station, received chloroform, had his arm amputated, his head dressed, and then left the hospital to continue his walk to the field-hospital two miles away. I met him on the road, and he was obviously suffering great pain, but quite indifferent, because, he said, "Shojusan is taken." He was well enough to take a cigar and smoke it, and then told me a 37-mm. pom-pom shell had struck him. Another man, shot through the liver, arrived at the dressing-station, tore off his coat in a careless manner, and requested the surgeon to dress his wounds. A case, which I did not witness myself, and hardly to be believed except by those who know what the Japanese soldier is, and the wonderful nerves and vitality he possesses, was that of a soldier who was shot on New Banrhusan. A bullet passed through his chest, but nevertheless the soldier walked two miles to the hospital of the 9th Division. There he was at-

tended by a surgeon, and coolly asked if he would live. The surgeon, who knew the man's case was quite hopeless, but not wishing to tell him so, replied "Yes," but immediately afterwards gave the deception away by saying to him, "If you have anything to say, or any letter you wish written, you had better do it at once." The soldier replied, "All I desire is that a letter should be written to my mother." Having uttered these words, he fell dead on the spot. This incident is vouched for by two officers on the staff of the 9th Division who were present, and proves that the often-criticised incident in Browning's poem is not impossible. I only quote these facts to show the manner in which the spirit of an entire army can be raised by a great success after months of repeated failure.

Although it had not been announced on the previous day, a rumour began to circulate on the afternoon of the 31st that, as the attack on Shojusan had been so successful, a general advance was to take place along the whole line from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan. A determined effort would be made that night to drive the Russians from all those positions along the eastern section of the line which still remained in their possession. Throughout the evening the Japanese artillery continued to bombard the Russian forts, and just before dark the infantry crept forward along the line and commenced to climb the hills. Exactly when the various positions were captured I am unable to say, on account of the darkness. The fighting lasted, without any great severity, throughout the night. The Japanese infantry crept forward out of Banrhusan East and Fort Ichinohe, passed the Chinese Wall, and pushed forward up the valley separating Bodai from H Work.

One after another the positions fell into their hands, for the Russians offered but a feeble resistance.

At dawn on New Year's day the entire line from Shojusan to the neck of Bodai was swarming with black-coated Japanese. For the first time I saw thousands of soldiers climbing about the Russian positions unmolested, except for an occasional shell. The change was startling in its suddenness, and for a time it was hard to believe it was true, and that those thousands of men were really Japanese in possession at last of that grim line of hills, that had caused such enormous losses, and given rise to so many deeds of heroism during the five months of the siege. I have said that the whole line was in possession of the Japanese; that is, however, not strictly accurate. The peak of Bodai, with the muzzles of its two great guns still peeping defiantly from their rocky resting-place, remained to be captured. The Russians seemed loth to part with this cherished possession, the highest and most precipitous point along the whole line, and one which in the past had served them to such good purpose, without a fight befitting its importance.

Throughout the morning and the early part of the afternoon what was destined to be the last great artillery duel between the combatants was kept up with the greatest fury. I suppose the Russians had already received a warning, or knew instinctively that the hour-glass was running out, for they used the ammunition of their big guns in a reckless manner they had never done before. Almost every gun on the forts behind the captured line—from Golden Hill, Paiyuishan, Shiyoanchisan, Daianchisan, Isusan, Tayanko, Higashi Keikwansan, and Roritsushi—were firing with great rapidity, and also with remarkable

precision. The fire of the majority of the guns was concentrated on the captured line of forts, and the object of the gunners was to drop their shells on the reverse slopes of the hills where the Japanese infantry was thickly massed. From the crowd of Japanese soldiers on the hills it was evident that the commanders were determined to hold their ground at all costs. To judge from the number of men wandering in all directions, and almost hiding the green of the slopes in their black overcoats, a great counter-attack might have been expected at any minute.

The leading trait of the Japanese character—their extreme curiosity—asserted itself on this occasion, in spite of the artillery-fire. No amount of concentrated shell-fire could rob the Mikado's soldier of his great joy in life, to examine something new at the earliest opportunity, no matter how unfavourable the conditions. The men, in little groups, swarmed over the forts held by the enemy six hours previously. They examined the captured guns; they crept into the bomb-proof shelters; they routed out the property left by the Russians, and laughingly commented on the domestic characteristics of their opponents. It was a great day for the private soldier, and especially a great day for the soldiers of the 9th Division. The line of forts opposite their trenches had been the most successfully attacked, and also the first to fall. General Oshima, their commander, directed the operations from the high ground just in front of his headquarters. All eyes were fixed on the peak of Bodai, which alone remained in the hands of the enemy. The General always went into action in a short light-blue coat lined with fur, which gave

him a remarkably picturesque appearance, but it also provided a fine mark for the enemy. On this, the last day of active operations, a big shell, either aimed or by accident, nearly destroyed him and the members of his staff.

The air was full of shells, bursting in places they had never burst before. Many of the shots were apparently aimed at nothing in particular, but merely with the design of getting rid of as much ammunition as possible before the end came. The Russians concentrated a heavy fire on the battery of 28-centimetre howitzers in position close to the headquarters of the 9th Division. These four guns had perhaps, more than any others, brought about the fall of the fortress, and the Russians appreciated the part they had played in the siege. They therefore naturally had a spite against this particular battery. During the last bombardment of the siege they tried their utmost to pay off old scores and to put the guns out of action. They brought to bear on them a big howitzer on the fort of Roritsushi, the most easterly of all their positions. This gun, which I had never seen in action previously, was beautifully served. The Russian gunners had gauged the position of the big howitzers accurately, and aimed at their smoke after each discharge. They were able to send shell after shell within a few yards of the guns, but fortune had declared herself in favour of the Japanese so clearly during the last few days that the battery escaped unharmed.

Throughout the earlier part of the afternoon of New Year's day the Japanese artillery concentrated their fire on the peak of Bodai, which became lost to view, the shells bursting in rapid succession. The

Japanese infantry were massed on a dead ground quite close to the summit, which is very steep and rocky, and except for a trench was defended by no artificial obstacles. Two soldiers crept forward at 3 P.M. to reconnoitre the ground, and to discover if the Russians had evacuated the summit of the mountain. They returned after a few minutes with apparently a favourable report, for the infantry, who had been seated or lying down among the rocks, now fell in in little groups. The Japanese artillery commenced a final bombardment, of a character so severe that even the oldest soldiers stared at one another in astonishment, while some made comments and laughed. The field-howitzer batteries fired in salvoes, and the shells reaching the peak at identically the same moment, caused such a disturbance that masses of rock were loosed, and rolled down the hillside.

The final assault on Bodai was carried out at the discretion of the officer in command of the troops on the mountain, for General Oshima had left the hill from which he had watched the engagement and returned to his quarters. Lieutenant Hori, his aide-de-camp, informed me that Oshima had given out that no attack would be made before the evening. It was therefore with some surprise that we saw the troops fall in, and at 3.35 commence to advance. The leading company spread out in an irregular line, without any particular formation, but with every man apparently anxious to be the first to stand on the peak. Up they climbed, the last few yards with the assistance of hands and knees, for the rocks were steep and jagged by the bursting of innumerable shells. The leading men were only a few yards from the crest when the Japanese artillery fired its last round.

For a moment the soldiers appeared on the sky-line, then they were over the top and lost to view. Hori seized a pencil, and hastily wrote a note to inform his general of this "crowning mercy," the capture of dread Bodai of unhappy memory. The message was despatched down the hill by an orderly, and we once more looked at the peak. There was a change; for the Japanese infantry were retiring down the steep side of a mountain, and leaving many fallen men to mark the line of their descent. "It is not taken yet, then," was the grieved remark of the aide-de-camp who had just sent the glad tidings to his general. Not yet, but the end was shortly to come. The Russian had his last trump to play, and he was determined to play it before the enemy should claim the game.

The few Russian soldiers who had retired just beneath the reverse slope when the peak of Bodai was rendered untenable by the concentrated artillery-fire, rushed once again to the summit when the leading Japanese infantry appeared over the crest, and for a moment succeeded in driving them back. A Russian poured oil over the woodwork forming the top of the bomb-proof shelters and the stand for the two great long-barrelled 6-inch guns, which in August were smashed and rendered useless. He then applied a match, and the Russians bolted for their lives down the slope towards the town. The Japanese, temporarily checked, once more advanced to the crest just as the flames were bursting out, and unfortunately for many just a few minutes too soon. Without any warning the top of the mountain seemed to rise in the air and then spread out like a black pall, hiding the crest and half of the slopes from view for several minutes. It was a

perfect representation of a miniature volcanic eruption. The Russians had fired their mine, the bolt of Bodai was shot, and exactly fifteen minutes before four on New Year's afternoon the mountain which had caused so much loss to the besiegers, and had proved such a giant in the defence, passed into the hands of the Japanese, with this final protest against the change. It was a fitting climax to the desperate contest which had been waged on its slopes and on the hills around during the past six months.

It was then the turn of the Russians to bombard Bodai, and this they did with the utmost vigour. The Japanese were forced to evacuate the crest, and retire a short distance down the slope for shelter. Throughout the remainder of the afternoon, and in the gathering twilight, the bombardment never ceased. Shells were passing one another in the air with a frequency not seen for months. The Russian gunner was exhausting his spare ammunition in a manner that must have delighted his heart. It did not matter what he aimed at, it did not matter if he hit anything, and it did not matter if his shells went to places where no enemy could possibly have existed. All the Russian gunner desired was to go through the mechanical operation, to load and to fire.

The general advance made on the night of December 31, against the eastern section of defences, was coincident with an attack of the 7th Division against the inner line of defence of the Russians in the west. The attack commenced at 8 A.M. on New Year's day, and was kept up without intermission until 2 P.M., when the Russians were forced to retire. The 7th Division thus gained a foothold close to the New Town, entirely cutting the communication between the northern forts

in the west, Isusan, Daianchisan, Shiyoanchisan, and the defences round Laoteshan. It must not be supposed that this attack brought about the fall of Port Arthur; it was the fall of the chain of works from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan which led to the decision to surrender, and which took the backbone out of the resistance of the Russians in the west, enabling the 7th Division to score their well-earned triumph.

While the final attack on Bodai was in progress, and the artillery duel still continued, the under-current of peace was making itself felt a few miles to the west. At 4.30 on the afternoon of New Year's day a Russian officer, accompanied by an orderly bearing a flag of truce, reached the Japanese lines to the south of the village of Suishien. He carried a letter from General Stoessel, addressed to General Nogi. The letter was handed over to the Japanese, and reached General Nogi's quarters the same evening. It was written in English, and was as follows:—

PORT ARTHUR
(*undated*).

General Baron NOGI.

SIR,—Taking into consideration the state of affairs at the seat of war in general, I find the future resistance of Port Arthur useless, and with a view of saving fruitless loss of life I would like to negotiate about the capitulation. I beg you to appoint a delegate for the purpose of discussing about the conditions of the capitulation, and to choose a place where my delegate may meet with him. I avail myself of this opportunity to express my sentiments of esteem.

STOESSEL, *General.*

The receipt of this letter did not, however, put an end to hostilities, which were kept up during the night, and the closing scenes of strife were witnessed on the slopes of Fort Higashi Keikwansan. In the middle of the night the Russians on the fort opened up a fusilade against the Japanese trenches. The Japanese lay low, and took no notice of the fire. At 2 A.M. on January 2 the Russian guns on Higashi Keikwansan fired their final round. The garrison immediately evacuated the fort, blew it up, then retired to the low hills behind the captured line of works. The explosion was so effective that it was impossible to trace the lines of the fort afterwards. The great guns were lifted bodily from their carriages, and blown, in one case, a distance of nearly fifty yards. Immediately after the explosion the Japanese infantry crept up the hill, and for the first time found themselves in possession of the fort which had caused them more trouble and loss than almost any other position. The garrison of Higashi Keikwansan had the satisfaction of knowing that it remained unconquered throughout the entire siege, and that its final destruction was accomplished, not by the enemy, but by their own act. With the occupation of this fort, the siege of Port Arthur came to a close. Several forts claim the honour of having fired the last round, and it either rests between Higashi Keikwansan or one of the western group.

CHAPTER XXV.

SURRENDER AND CELEBRATION.

Up to the morning of December 31 I do not think any one with General Nogi's army considered the fall of Port Arthur to be imminent; but after the easy success of the Japanese in taking Shojusan, and the manner in which the Russians surrendered the position after only one hour's fighting, things began to assume a new aspect. Even then it was thought that at least another month would elapse before the end came. We judged the Russians by their own words, and Stoessel's celebrated dictum was ever present in our minds—"I shall die in the last ditch." Little or nothing was known accurately of the fortifications of Port Arthur, and if some one had suddenly announced that the last ditch was situated on the eastern section of the outer line of fortifications, his ignorant optimism would have been laughed to scorn. The Japanese had a vague idea that a second line of defence existed on the hills behind the first line, and expected the remnant of the Russian garrison to retreat across the intervening valley and make a final stand on this new position. If that, too, should be taken, we recalled to mind the intention attributed to Stoessel of retreating with the remnant of his garrison to Laoteshan and of making a final stand

on that rocky eminence until starvation should finally compel the surrender of the General and his heroic troops. On the morning of New Year's day, when the whole of the eastern section of the line of fortifications from North Keikwansan to Shojusan was seen to be swarming with black-coated Japanese soldiers, while Russian shells burst where only Japanese shells had burst before, every one realised that a crisis was at hand. Either the final scene was about to be enacted, or some new phase of the siege commenced. The manner in which the Russians clung to the summit of Bodai on the afternoon of New Year's day did not look like the resistance of men about to surrender. Rather it appeared as if they were slowly retreating to their final positions, there to prepare everything in readiness for a new period of resistance before they parted with their last remaining stronghold on the outer line, the mountain of Bodai.

No answer was returned to Stoessel's letter on New Year's day, but at 5 A.M. on the following morning, January 2, Major Yamaoka, an officer on the staff of General Nogi, set out from headquarters to convey the reply of his General. Major Yamaoka is a Russian scholar, and is the same officer who conveyed the Mikado's letter to the Russians at the commencement of the siege offering to allow all the women, children, and non-combatants to leave the town. To this gallant officer and courteous gentleman all the foreigners with General Nogi's army were indebted for many acts of kindness and consideration, for he was one of the few who understood foreigners and appreciated their position. We recall his name with pleasure, and his sad fate with sympathy and regret. After taking part in two historical scenes and the many perils of the siege,

later on, at the battle of Mukden, while conversing with a staff officer of the 9th Division, both were severely wounded by a shrapnel shell which burst right over them, and Major Yamaoka was rendered totally blind.

The answer reached the Russian lines at 9.30 A.M., or 8.30 Japanese time, and merely requested the Russian delegates to come to the south of the village of Suishien at 11 o'clock that same morning, when they would be conducted to a house in the village, where the negotiators could meet in private and discuss matters. It was tacitly understood that while the delegates were negotiating an armistice should take place. Not one of the foreigners with the Japanese army knew of the messenger having arrived on the previous day, or of Stoessel's desire to capitulate. Personally, I had been down all day watching the Japanese soldiers attack Bodai. On my way home along the Shell Strewn Road, the Russians continued to fire in the most reckless manner, apparently with no other idea in their minds than to use up their ammunition. This reckless waste of ammunition gave me my first inkling that the end was approaching.

On the road I met two Japanese soldiers, one of whom could speak a few words of English, and seemed very anxious to make friends with me. He begged me to accompany him to his camp, where he said he could give me supper; but as his camp was a long way from mine, I said I was unable to go, but that I would like to see him some other day. This answer did not appear to satisfy him, for he kept on taking hold of my coat-sleeve, and endeavoured to drag me towards his camp in a perfectly friendly manner. I soon discovered by a few questions that he was not sure who or what I was, and was rather inclined to

regard me as an escaping Russian; but he did not wish to admit his doubts, and tried in this way to induce me to come to his camp, where I could be identified. We had reached a point behind the big howitzer battery, which all day had bombarded the Russian positions, but now had ceased to fire. The Russians were firing a naval 4·7 gun at this battery, but they had almost ceased at the time, for it was nearly 6.30. I walked along wondering whether we were really near the termination of the siege; the Russians fired one last round from their naval gun, which burst on the hill immediately in front of the Japanese battery and split into two large pieces. We heard one of these pieces coming in our direction; it made an appalling noise, and involuntarily all three of us jumped into a hollow by the side of the road. However, as it was the fragment passed high over our heads, but we could follow its course through space. There was a Japanese soldier standing in the road about 100 yards farther on, and he suddenly leapt into the air. The fragment of shell had landed right at his feet, but luckily failed to hit him, and the shock sent him up like a rabbit. Oddly enough, I had a sort of presentiment that it was the last shell I should see fired, and I told my Japanese friends I should like to keep it as a souvenir. We all walked to the soldier, who was standing in the road laughing at his narrow escape, and then commenced to hunt among the rocks for the piece of shell; but it had disappeared somewhere, and we never found it.

As a matter of fact, that was the last shell I saw fired from Port Arthur, and it was almost the last one fired during the siege. There was some further fighting that night, for the Russians on Higashi Keikwansan

suddenly decided to evacuate the position in the middle of the night, and commenced to retreat. Before doing so the soldiers in the fort fired volleys into the Japanese entrenchments, and at 2 A.M. retreated, after blowing up the fort and completely destroying the interior. The Japanese occupied the position immediately after the explosion.

It was customary to go round to headquarters every morning to learn what was to take place on the following day, and also to find out if anything had happened during the night at more distant points. At 9 A.M. on the morning of January 2 a little group of representatives of the press assembled in the small room provided for them since the advent of the cold weather. Little was said; no one knew of the approaching surrender; but we began to discuss the probable date of the fall, which in any case now seemed appreciably nearer than we had thought. Wild rumours were in the air, some about surrender, others pointed to a further desperate resistance. If we could only have forgotten that "last ditch," the scales might have fallen from our eyes; but how could the last ditch occupy such an advanced position? We sent for Captain Yasuhara, our faithful cicerone, whose duty it was to keep us informed of current events. On this occasion Captain Yasuhara was some time in making an appearance, and when the door finally opened it was not the Captain, but an orderly, who appeared carrying a tray on which was a bottle of liqueur brandy and several glasses. We gazed at this strange apparition with wonder, for when a Japanese officer commences to drink liqueur brandy at 9 o'clock in the morning, something very strange must have happened during the night.

A few moments later Captain Yasuhara himself appeared. "Gentlemen, General Stoessel has capitulated; Port Arthur has surrendered," were his first words. We all involuntarily shouted "Banzai!"—which, by the way, is a far better word for giving expression to your feelings than Hurrah, and also has a definite meaning—"Live for ever." Now that the Anglo-Japanese alliance has been renewed, could it not be adopted for the use of both nations? Captain Yasuhara smiled, and then proceeded with commendable despatch to pour out the brandy into the glasses and hand it round. Our first toast was "The Mikado"; our second, "King Edward," and the list lasted as long as the bottle held out. General Nogi then appeared, and we congratulated him. After shaking hands all round, he posed for several photographs, one of which will be found in this work. It was now time to return to business and learn the details of what had happened, and what was about to happen. General Stoessel's precious message was produced in its original form, and we were allowed to stroke it while the corners were carefully held by Captain Yasuhara. No one was allowed to take the message in his hand: it seemed as if they were afraid that Stoessel might go back on his word, and that unless they preserved this document there would be no proof that he had ever expressed a desire to surrender.

First and foremost, every one was anxious to find out where the delegates were to meet, and at what hour. It was quickly seen that no time was to be wasted in arranging details, for Yasuhara announced that at 11 o'clock that very morning the delegates would assemble in the village of Suishien (nearly two hours' distance from headquarters), and that any one

who desired to be present at this historic episode had better hasten there at once, as it was now almost 11 o'clock. I did not reach Suishien until 1.30, but luckily the delegates were two hours late in arriving.

The Russian party consisted of seventeen in all, and was made up of Colonel Reiss, the Chief of Staff to General Stoessel, three other colonels, Captain Sennsonowitch of the *Retvizan*, Lieutenant Maltschenko, a midshipman, an interpreter, one N.C.O., and eight Cossacks. This little group, headed by a Cossack, who carried a large white flag on a long pole, rode up to a cottage in the village, one of the few Chinese houses left undestroyed, dismounted, and immediately passed inside. The Cossacks then sat down on a bank by the roadside, still holding up their white flag. The Japanese delegates were already assembled inside the house, and consisted of General Ijichi, Chief of Staff to General Nogi; Major Yamaoka; Captain Tsunoda; Mr Iwamura, a clerk in the Foreign Office; Dr Ariga, a celebrated international lawyer; and several interpreters. The negotiations were carried on in English, with occasional asides in Russian. Major-General Ijichi speaks and understands English, and Dr Ariga is also an excellent English scholar, but amongst the Russians the young midshipman was the only efficient linguist; so to him fell the difficult task of confronting a celebrated international lawyer and a famous Chief of Staff. However, thanks to the desire which animated both sides to arrive at a speedy settlement along the line of least resistance, the negotiations were carried on almost without a hitch. Unfortunately for sightseers, everything was conducted with the utmost secrecy within closed doors, and the course of events could only be followed by the hasty

THE CAPITULATION, JANUARY 2, 1905.

exit, from time to time, of a Japanese or Russian officer, who would despatch an orderly either to the head-quarters of General Nogi or to Port Arthur. I am afraid, therefore, that no dramatic picture will go down to posterity of this epoch-making event, such as that of the capitulation of Sedan, where Napoleon III. and Bismarck are seen sitting at a table outside a cottage while details are discussed. Nor shall we again have such a picture as that in which the unhappy Wimpfen is begging for better terms for his army, while the hard-featured Moltke stands with his finger pointed at a map, on which is marked the position of his artillery, ready in case of a hitch to blow the remains of MacMahon's host into eternity.

The beautiful and picturesque scenes which made war so attractive in the past have gone for ever, chiefly because the imagination of the artist and the cold facts recorded by the camera so seldom coincide. At the negotiations before Port Arthur, both sides were only too anxious to come to terms, and ready to meet each other's suggestions in a spirit of benevolent indulgence. Nevertheless, if the principal actors were absent, and if the curtain failed to rise during the day on their movements, the scene outside was sufficiently picturesque to appeal to the most unimaginative. Nature herself seemed determined to show approval of the turn events had taken, and provided the most perfect weather we had had at Port Arthur during the entire siege. The sun shone with almost summer warmth on the proceedings, so unlike any which had taken place during the past five months. The house of peace was situated in the centre of the village, with a large open space before it, forming a sort of village-green. On the

afternoon of January 2 this square was thronged with a crowd of Japanese soldiers, who had come from the surrounding camps to see their enemy armed with the olive-branch in place of the rifle. In the centre of this throng, sitting on a little bank, were the Cossacks holding their horses. One of them held on high a long pole with a square of ordinary linen, the symbol of peace, and by his side sat a Japanese cavalry soldier who also held a similar pole with a similar square of canvas. Every one present took his cue from these two soldiers, and the utmost good-nature was written on the childlike faces of the Japanese privates and on the open countenances of the fair-haired, broad-shouldered Cossacks. The latter showed no sign of hardship or privation as they met the gaze of their adversaries and commented on their appearance, frequently indulging in laughter as some point in the dress or the bearing of the Mikado's soldiers struck them as comical. The Japanese soldiers apparently also found something irresistibly funny in the Cossacks, and so the afternoon passed in much good-humoured chaff, from which all trace of animosity was absent.

A mile to the south of the meeting-place the eye roamed over the arena of the strife, which had only ceased at 2 A.M. that very morning. Shojusan was still smoking; the grim escarpment of Nirusan stood out, the embodiment of a determined defence, which had only succumbed to the repeated assaults of soldiers who knew not defeat; the other hills and forts were swarming with black-coated Japanese soldiers; on the ridges beyond them the Russians came out for the first time from their trenches; and a narrow valley 200 yards in width lay between the

combatants of yesterday. To the west the Russians still remained in full possession of those forts which had not been attacked during the siege.

The first conference was held at 1.20. The Chiefs of Staff shook hands, exchanged their credentials, and then presented their respective suites to one another. The Japanese *parlementaires* handed to the Russians the terms of capitulation and supplementary documents, and asked them to consider them in a separate room for half an hour, or as long as they should desire. Before parting the Russians asked if the terms were final. The Japanese replied "Yes," but at the same time stated they would be pleased to consider any suggestions or modifications which the Russians might have to make. Briefly stated, the Japanese demanded the unconditional surrender of Port Arthur, and the handing over of all property except such private articles as might be required by the prisoners for personal use. All public and private property in Port Arthur was to be taken over by the Japanese and held until disposed of. At the same time a telegram, addressed by the Mikado to General Nogi, was presented to the Russians, in which the Mikado stated that, appreciating the gallant manner in which the Russians had fought during the siege, he allowed all Russian officers to return to Russia who gave their parole not to serve again during the war. General Stoessel's delegates retired a second time for ten minutes, but at 1.30 they returned and repeated their previous question, "Are the terms final?" The Japanese replied as before in the affirmative.

At 2.30 the second conference took place. The Russians, determined to keep up their game of bluff to the last, presented a kind of counter-proposal to the

Japanese demand for unconditional surrender, containing the following modifications, which, in view of the Japanese reply, can only have been suggested in order to prolong the negotiations: (1) That all private soldiers and sailors, as well as officers, should be allowed to return to Russia. (2) That, as they had no law in Russia by which an individual could bind himself by oath not to serve again, they should be allowed to communicate direct with the Czar before availing themselves of the opportunity given to the officers to return on parole. (3) That, in reply to a Japanese question contained in one of the supplementary documents, all the men in the fortress, except about 4000, were either sick or wounded. (4) That, also in reply to a question, all regimental colours had been burnt. (5) That they should be allowed to keep all their horses, of which they stated there were 1800 still in the fortress. (6) That each officer might be allowed to take one orderly with him. (7) That the Japanese should not interfere with the hospitals. (8) That they desired to know what should be done with the Japanese prisoners, numbering sixty in all. At 3.7 P.M. the negotiators parted, the Japanese retiring to consider the Russian reply.

At 3.37 the third conference was held. The Japanese replied in detail to each of the points raised by the Russians. (1) All officers, and all civilians or other non-combatants, would be allowed to return to Russia on parole, the officers retaining their swords; but all soldiers and sailors would have to surrender as prisoners of war. (2) Each officer would be allowed to take one orderly. (3) All horses would have to be surrendered. (4) Each Russian officer would be allowed the same amount of baggage as a Japanese officer of

corresponding rank while on active service. (5) All other private property would be left in the fortress and its disposal arranged afterwards. (6) Hospital buildings were to remain unchanged.

While this third conference was in progress fires broke out in various parts of the town, and General Ijichi pointed out to Colonel Reiss that it was a gross violation of the armistice to destroy property while the negotiations were actually taking place. Colonel Reiss immediately sent in an urgent message to General Stoessel, asking him to put a stop to these conflagrations. This message was despatched by a Cossack orderly accompanied by a Japanese soldier. Later in the afternoon the fires were partly extinguished; General Stoessel replied he would do his best to put a stop to them, and that they were the work of incendiaries.

In stating their final terms, the Japanese consented to send a telegram to the Czar from the Russians, asking his consent to the officers giving their parole, provided this message was written clearly in English. At the same time it was arranged that the signing of the capitulation should take place as soon as it was drawn up, and should not be delayed for a reply from the Czar. At 7.30 P.M. the message to the Czar was handed to the Japanese. At 8.45 P.M. the capitulation was signed by the Chiefs of Staff; Colonel Reiss signed first, and General Ijichi immediately below.

Having disposed of the official proceedings, the delegates were able to meet on a more informal footing, and proceeded to discuss the siege and its chief events among themselves. Balashoff, the head of the Russian Red Cross Society, who did splendid work during the siege, stated that there were absolutely no luxuries or

comforts for the sick and wounded, and asked that a supply might be sent in immediately. At 9 o'clock the delegates dined together in the house in which the negotiations had been conducted. Colonel Reiss stated that the main reason for the surrender of Port Arthur was the number of the sick and wounded, the condition of the hospitals, and the lack of food and ammunition. He also said that the Russians might have held out for another five days, but that as there was no object to be served by further resistance, they had decided to surrender. The Japanese asked how many soldiers would march out of the fortress as prisoners of war, as they desired to make adequate arrangements for their reception. Colonel Reiss then repeated the extraordinary statement that only 4000 men would be able to march out of the fortress; but this number subsequently swelled to over 1300 officers and 24,000 soldiers and sailors. The gallant Colonel, as Chief of the Staff, should certainly have known more of the condition of the fortress; for in addition to his miscalculation of the numbers of the combatants, provisions for four months were afterwards found in the town, and ammunition sufficient to last for a considerable time. At 10.30 the delegates of both armies left Suishien and returned to their respective headquarters.

The Japanese did not enter Port Arthur immediately after the capitulation. It was arranged that all the Russian prisoners should march out of the fortress on the days following the surrender, and that the Japanese should send in officers and interpreters to take over the public buildings, and also gendarmes to patrol the town; for there were several thousand disbanded soldiers and labourers roaming about at large, from whom trouble might be expected. As it was, twelve

days elapsed before General Nogi made his triumphal entry at the head of his army. This period of inaction was very trying, but we were obliged to submit to it with the best grace possible, for foreigners, generals, and privates were all treated exactly alike.

As a race the Japanese are by no means adverse to celebrations of that description which have now become generally known as "Mafficking." Throughout the war, whenever news of a victory reached Tokio the crowds assembled in the evening with lanterns and flags, and paraded the town in exactly the same manner as our own crowds at the time of the South African war. The newspapers issued special editions, little printed sheets, which announced the great events, and these were sold in thousands by runners, who kept ringing bells as they ran along. In Tokio, however, the opportunities for such displays were somewhat more numerous than in London.

In the field these jubilations were curtailed to the smallest possible dimensions, and the celebration in the Japanese camps, when it became known that Port Arthur had fallen, was almost ludicrously inadequate to the immensity of the event. What would a European army have done after a triumph so great as that of General Nogi and his gallant troops? Surely the rejoicings would have lasted for days. If a stranger had arrived among the soldiers immediately after the surrender, it would have been almost impossible for him to tell by the demeanour of the officers or men that anything extraordinary had happened, much less that the seemingly impregnable stronghold of Russia in the Far East had just fallen. On the evening of January 2 the soldiers celebrated their victory in a most befitting and

orderly manner. Even then it was not so much the sense of triumph as the intense joy at having finished with Port Arthur that animated them. But they were inspired by a greater hope. They knew that the fall of the fortress would not end their exertions, and that General Nogi and his 100,000 veterans were wanted, the moment they were free, to cast their weight into the scales against Kouropatkin. The moment had come when these insatiable fighters could participate in the final event of the war. On the night of January 2 enthusiasm was at its height. In every camp the soldiers lit fires; along the crest of the captured Russian positions every hill had its blaze; while miles in the rear solitary lights twinkled in the darkness of the winter night and marked the post of some commissariat camp, or some group of soldiers guarding the lines of communication. At the camp-fires the soldiers congregated in thousands and shouted themselves hoarse, singing patriotic songs and uttering loud "Banzais" as they danced round the flames.

Strangers who approached one of these camp-fires were sure of a great reception, and the soldiers insisted on our joining in their festivities and shared their saki with us, which that night was served out freely. To a spectator standing on one of the numerous hills, the whole country presented an extraordinary spectacle, lit up as it was for over twenty miles with innumerable fires, until it resembled some great city half hidden by mist. The shouts of "Banzai!" resounded on every side, and as each camp uttered the national war-cry it was taken up all along the line, until it was lost miles to the west in Pigeon Bay.

At the headquarters of the army the same scene of enthusiasm was to be witnessed. I had occasion to visit an officer on the staff, and found the headquarters temporarily transformed. Business was at a standstill; every one was celebrating. I found the stolid-looking "kepis," the gendarmes whose duty it was to act as military police, sitting at their supper-tables and drinking champagne, claret, beer, brandy, and saki in large quantities, their faces wreathed in smiles of benevolent happiness. Every group insisted upon your having supper with them. Thus the night wore itself out; but when the sun rose on the following morning the iron bonds of discipline had once more closed round the revellers, and at daybreak the army was again the same perfect fighting machine, and ready to march to the north.

The day after the capitulation General Nogi despatched his A.D.C., Captain Tsunoda, into Port Arthur to convey his respects to General and Madame Stoessel, and ask if anything could be done for their comfort; at the same time he suggested that, now hostilities had ceased, a meeting might be arranged between General Stoessel and himself. On January 4 Tsunoda again visited the General and his wife, and conveyed a present to Madame Stoessel, consisting of twenty-four chickens, twelve bottles of champagne, and twelve bottles of claret. Captain Tsunoda was accompanied by Mr Iwamura, a clerk in the Japanese Foreign Office, and an interview of the most friendly character took place at General Stoessel's house between the general, his wife, and the two Japanese officers. Iwamura spoke in Russian to Madame Stoessel, and Tsunoda in French, through an interpreter, with the General.

Stoessel's first question was, "Where is Kouropatkin?" Tsunoda: "I do not know, but I imagine him to be somewhere on the Shaho." Stoessel: "The last time I heard from him was on October 6, when he wrote to me to say, 'My good comrade, it is only necessary to hold out for a short time longer, because I am coming with my entire army to relieve you.' I sent out Chinese spies to find out his position; one reported him at Nanshan, another at Chorashi [a village seven miles from Port Arthur], but I think he must be on the Shaho." Tsunoda: "Kouropatkin was beaten by Oyama on the Shaho, with the loss of fifty or sixty thousand men." Stoessel: "Where is the Baltic Fleet?" Tsunoda: "I do not know, but I believe that part of it has not yet got round the Cape of Good Hope." Stoessel: "Now that Port Arthur has fallen, it is no use for it to come any farther; it had better go back."

Stoessel, in answer to the question "What caused you most trouble during the siege?" replied, "The 28-centimetre howitzers; after their arrival our fortifications were useless. I opposed Saharoff, the Mayor of Dalny, in his plan of building a port and dock at Dalny, and I said all these works should be at Port Arthur. Saharoff is now dead of dysentery. I was opposed to the war because I knew all about the Japanese, having worked with them in the Boxer campaign, where I met Generals Yamaguchi [since dead] and Fukashima. My Division, the 3rd, and the Japanese, in my opinion did the lion's share of the work in that war. Since then I have thoroughly appreciated the skill and bravery of the Japanese generals and soldiers. Some say Alexeieff brought on the war, but that is not true; for Alexeieff was

always opposed to war, and did not despise the Japanese, because he was at Tientsin during the Boxer troubles and learned to appreciate them."

Stoessel further praised the skill and patience of the Japanese engineers in "digging, digging, digging." At first he did not consider their artillery practice particularly good, but afterwards he found out how excellent it was. He considered that the real cause of the war was the ignorance of the great mass of the Russian people as to the true character of the Japanese. (It surely was the last straw laid on the camel's back to saddle the unfortunate Russian people with the responsibility of the war.) Stoessel stated that he really had no right to be in Port Arthur, because his Division, the 3rd, was in the north: the 4th and 7th Divisions were in Port Arthur. When the Japanese made their first naval attack in February he was astounded at the outbreak of hostilities, because the forts were only half completed and the garrison only numbered some 3000 men in all. General Kondrachenko and a certain colonel of engineers devoted themselves to the completion of the defences, but both these heroes were killed in the north fort on December 25 by the explosion of a 28-centimetre shell. Stoessel greatly praised Kondrachenko, and said he was a graduate of the Staff College and a first-rate engineer. Stoessel added that he himself had been in three wars: the Turko-Russian, where he was Staff Captain and was wounded; the Boxer War, where he was General of Division and was also wounded; and the present war, when he was again wounded. Kouropatkin had been his class-mate. He thought that he had now served his country well enough, and had no other desire than to

retire to his estate and end his days surrounded by his family. He had adopted five children of officers who were killed during the siege. At the close of the interview Stoessel said it would give him great pleasure to come out and meet General Nogi in the village of Suishien. The interview was arranged for twelve o'clock the following day.

The great event of January 5 was the meeting of the two Generals, and every one with the army was anxious to be present at this historic scene. Everything was done to prevent any appearance of a triumph. Special orders were issued that the troops were not to be allowed to congregate in the village of Suishien and along the roads leading to "The Temple of Peace," as the cottage in the village had come to be called. General Nogi, who was the host of the occasion, should have been in the house to receive the Russian General and his staff when they arrived, but owing to a lamentable error in the arrangements everything went wrong from a very simple cause, which should have been anticipated. It had been settled that Captain Tsunoda should ride to Stoessel's headquarters and conduct him to the rendezvous. Stoessel had arranged on the previous day to meet Nogi at twelve o'clock; but the difference in Russian and Japanese time had been forgotten by both parties, and so what meant midday for the Russians meant one o'clock by Japanese time. I went down to Suishien village, arriving there about a quarter to twelve, but could see no signs of anybody, and finally found a few correspondents who had arrived there some time previous to myself. They told me that about half-past eleven General Stoessel had ridden up with his staff,

and that there was not a soul to show him the way to the meeting-place. Luckily he encountered this small group of Englishmen, who were in the village to await his arrival. They had given the General a cheer and pointed out the way to the cottage, to which the General and his staff had at once repaired, and, dismounting, passed inside. A few minutes after twelve Captain Tsunoda came *ventre à terre* from the direction of the town, looking as if he wished the earth would open and swallow him, for he had ridden into Port Arthur only to find that Stoessel had already left. Who shall say after this that the day of war correspondents is gone for ever? Had not this little group been there to welcome Stoessel, he might have ridden back to Port Arthur with much bitterness engendered in his breast.

A short time afterwards General Nogi and his staff arrived, and they immediately passed inside. Nogi was accompanied by his Chief of Staff, General Ijichi, Captain Matsuada, Captain Yasuhara, Captain Tsunoda, Mr Iwamura, and Major Watanabe. Stoessel's suite consisted of Colonel Reiss, his Chief of Staff; Lieutenants Novelskoy and Maltschenko of the Staff of the 3rd Siberian Army Corps; and a small escort of Cossacks under a non-commissioned officer. No white flags were used at this meeting, because the fortress had surrendered and the garrison had handed over their arms, which ended hostilities; but the Russian General, in consideration of his rank, was allowed to keep his armed private escort until he left Port Arthur on January 12. All foreigners were rigorously excluded from the meeting, but the Japanese gave an account of what took place afterwards,

and I shall repeat it just as it was announced in English on the following day, and without altering the quaint language.

"The two Generals first of all shook hands and then presented their respective staffs to one another. General Nogi expressed great pleasure at shaking hands with General Stoessel. Stoessel thanked Nogi for bringing about the meeting, and expressed great pleasure at shaking hands with such a warrior as General Nogi. General Nogi then told Stoessel of the message of the Mikado to treat him (Stoessel) with great homage because he had fought so bravely. Stoessel thanked the Mikado for his message, and said that now his family honour would be saved.

"Stoessel thanked Nogi for transmitting his message to the Czar, and General Nogi then handed in the reply of the Czar, which had been received that morning, and was as follows:—

"'I allow each officer to profit by the reserved privilege to return to Russia under obligation not to serve or take part in the present war, or to share the destiny of their men. I thank you and your garrison for their gallant defence. NICHOLAS.'

"Both Generals then praised the bravery of the troops of the other. The talk then passed on to the explosion on the Fort Shojusan on December 31, and Stoessel stated the entire garrison was destroyed by this great explosion. He praised the skill of the engineers and also the artillery practice, especially the concentrated fire following an explosion, and of the gallant deeds of the infantry there was no need for him to speak.

THE HEAD OF NOGI'S ESCORT AND THE HEAD OF STOESSEL'S ESCORT
WALKING ABOUT ARM IN ARM.

"Stoessel praised General Nogi's loyalty to the empire, and stated that he had heard that both his sons had died fighting for their country. To this General Nogi replied: 'One of my sons was killed at Nanshan, the other on 203 Metre Hill. Both those positions were important for my army to take, therefore I do not think their lives were spent in vain.'

"Stoessel asked Nogi to accept his charger, a grey Arab, as a token of his admiration for him. Nogi replied: 'Your kindness is beyond description. I cannot accept your present, because to the army belong all horses, cannon, and other booty, and I have no right to make them my private property; but I will see that great care is taken of your horse, and that he is treated with special kindness.' Nogi asked Stoessel to remain in his house at Port Arthur until he could make arrangements for his journey to Dalny, and from there to Russia.

"Stoessel asked Nogi to have the corpses of the Russians who had fallen during the siege collected together and buried in one spot. Nogi said he had buried the bodies of the Russians who had fallen during the siege, but promised, as soon as his army had time, to as far as possible collect them together and erect a monument to their memory.

"Nogi asked permission to have a photograph taken of the group, to which Stoessel consented, and had his Arab charger brought in, at the same time remarking, 'Is not this a nice horse?'"

During the meeting fires again broke out in the town. Stoessel apologised for this and attributed it to incendiarism, and asked that the Japanese troops might go in that day and take charge of the town.

This was done. Stoessel made the curious confession that one of his reasons for surrender was his difficulty in maintaining order among the 3000 or 4000 Russian labourers in the town, whom he described as ruffians.

While the Generals were engaged in conversation, the soldiers of their escorts were fraternising outside in the most friendly manner: they evidently considered it their duty to sink all differences and become friends, now their Generals had set them the example. The chief of Nogi's escort and the chief of Stoessel's escort entwined their arms round each other, and in this way strutted up and down, eager to come within the range of one of the numerous cameras which were ready to transfer this peculiar scene to history. The other soldiers did likewise, and falling in behind their sergeants, paraded about to the satisfaction of themselves and the amusement of the spectators, who recalled that, for the previous nine months, these men had been doing their best to kill one another. After the Generals had been together for about an hour, Stoessel and his staff took their departure. General Nogi left half an hour after Stoessel, and also took the road to Port Arthur, accompanied by a single aide-de-camp, Captain Yasuhara. The party proceeded round the line of the captured Russian forts, which Nogi saw at close quarters for the first time.

RUSSIAN SENTRIES HOLDING THEIR LAST WATCH ON THE COVERING FORT OF SHOJUSAN,

JANUARY 2, 1905.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CLOSING SCENES.

The terms of the capitulation provided that the Russians should march out on the afternoon of January 6 to a village called Lahutse, situated close to Pigeon Bay, and be temporarily housed there until proper arrangements could be made to convey them to Dalny. Lahutse is about fifteen miles from the railway station, and this distance the Russians had to cover on foot. On the 7th the first batch marched to Chorashi Station, and the scene was very picturesque as they tramped along the high-road. First came the officers carrying their swords, some mounted, and others trudging wearily. The officers were all splendidly dressed, and, in their light-blue overcoats and patent-leather boots, looked more as if they had just come from an Emperor's parade than from a siege of six months' duration. As for the soldiers, their clothes, and especially their boots, were in poor condition, and many wore Chinese costumes and sheepskin coats; but physically they appeared in excellent condition and in the best of health. Never were prisoners more lightly guarded. Here and there in the procession, through the cloud of dust raised as it passed along, you caught a glimpse

of a few little khaki-clad figures, with red blankets on their backs and rifles in their hands, apparently swallowed up in the dense column of Russians. These were the soldiers sent with the prisoners to guard against any attempt to escape. It was almost comical to see so few Japanese soldiers guarding those thousands of Russians; but the latter, although they could have scattered all over the country, knew perfectly well that to leave the peninsula was an impossibility, and were therefore little dissatisfied with the change of fortune which was to send them to a prison in Japan. Perhaps the most disagreeable part of the journey for them was when they passed through the streets of the villages and listened to the remarks of the Chinese; for the last time they had passed that way they had been a retreating, but not a defeated, army. Now the spell was broken, their glory had departed; and the Chinaman, unable to preserve his country for himself, had no intention of missing the opportunity of a laugh at those whose short-lived mastery had been so ruthless. The Chinese were enjoying a few days of comparative freedom, between the exit of one government and the installation of the next.

A camp was formed at Chorashi Station, where the prisoners were housed pending the arrival of the trains to convey them to Dalny. Here also food was served out to them with no stinting hand, each soldier having as many tins of meat and as many packages of army biscuits as he could possibly desire. All were apparently in excellent humour, and none seemed to feel their position very keenly. The officers paraded the platforms, smoked cigarettes and joked, as if the surrender of one of the strongest fortresses in the world was an everyday event. This callousness

of the Russian officers to the humiliation their country had suffered was the most marked feature of the surrender, and perhaps explains better than anything else the reasons for their defeat. They might be taken as saying, "Oh, all will come right in the end; we have done our best, and it is not our fault if things have gone wrong. The Czar is omnipotent, and he will put everything right." This is one result of a government in which the subjects take no part in governing; they naturally do not feel disaster in the same manner as a free people, who, sharing the responsibility, feel also that they share in the fortunes and misfortunes of the state.

On January 12 General Stoessel, his staff, and many of the 400 officers who had decided to accept the parole and not to share the captivity of their men, left Chorashi Station for Dalny. It was the original intention to send a train into Port Arthur for the General, but the line was too much damaged and could not be repaired in time; so the officers and ladies were obliged to drive the eight miles from the fortress to the railway. The drosky drivers in the town decided to strike, and knowing perfectly well their services were indispensable, they refused to carry the women and children unless they were paid at the most outrageous rates; so the unfortunate Russian officers had to pay £5 for a single-horse conveyance and £7 for a two-horse carriage. At the railway station a crowd had assembled to witness the departure of the fortunate ones going home: it had been quite eight months since a lady had been on the platform, and the scene was a gay one. Several hundred Russian officers strutted about, laughing and talking, as if the place still belonged to them, and they were merely going

for a short holiday before they again returned to claim their own. Little did they seem to realise the tragedy that was being enacted at Chorashi Station that morning.

The true significance of the event was in no way lost on the foreigners and the Japanese. To them the scene meant the final act in a drama commenced eight years before, when a combination of the Powers, by one of the most flagrant acts recorded in history, had forced the conquerors of Port Arthur to relinquish what they had legitimately won. And now the arch-conspirator of eight years ago was leaving the fortress he had acquired by craft and treading the same road back, not at the instigation of the Powers, but by defeat at the hands of the very nation he had robbed. The demeanour of the Japanese officers was all that could be desired; they were politeness itself, and to see them helping the Russians to sort their luggage and arrange their effects, one would have thought they were merely station officials. But beneath the unmoved exterior of these brave men there dwelt a hatred mingled with contempt for their adversaries which was only concealed because they held the upper hand so completely and could afford to be magnanimous. It is not in the nature of a chivalrous people to triumph over a fallen foe, even when that foe behaves in your presence with a misplaced and brutal arrogance. I went to Chorashi Station, like every one else, with a feeling of sympathy for the Russians; for so great had been their downfall and humiliation that common humanity could not but sympathise with the individual, whatever we felt towards the nation. But after watching the crowd of generals, colonels, and lesser magnates, arrayed in

costumes more fit for a ball than a tragedy, and seeing how lightly they felt their position and how contemptuously they received the assistance so readily given by their adversaries, all sympathy quickly evaporated, and its place was taken by a sense of justice done and judgment richly deserved.

Naturally unmixed sympathy was felt for the women and children huddled together on a few seats amidst such miserable surroundings. A poor woman had three children to look after, one only a few months old. The task was more than she could manage; but no helping hand was held out to her by the crowd of officers whose privations she had so bravely shared. They laughed and talked and brushed by her without taking the slightest notice. In the field the Russian private has often proved his superiority to his officer; the contrast in manners was even more marked on the Chorashi platform. A private soldier, dirty and unkempt, a peasant probably who had never learnt to read, went up and took one of the children in his arms and kept it until the train moved off. This was only a little incident, but there were many others.

General Stoessel, Madame Stoessel, Major-General Reiss (now promoted), and the other members of his staff, were almost the last to arrive at Chorashi. The General, riding his grey Arab charger for the last time, dismounted at the station, his staff following suit. With slow steps and bent heads they moved up the incline towards the platform, where the officers and generals stood ready to receive him. As he advanced the General saluted each acquaintance in turn, and they returned the salute in a respectful but none too cordial manner. Stoessel, with quickening steps, returned to the waiting-room, where his wife had al-

ready preceded him. Here they were entertained by Major-General Ijichi, who had arrived to bid farewell to the General on behalf of General Nogi. The two stood outside surrounded by a little group of officers and engaged in animated conversation.

One of the most moving scenes in history is Napoleon's farewell to the Old Guard before his departure for Elba. Port Arthur offered a splendid stage for a drama similar to "Les Adieux de Fontainebleau," and if only the chief actor had been equal to his part, the final scene, the farewell of Stoessel to the fortress and its defenders, might have become historical.

The train was then brought up to the platform and the doors were opened. Madame Stoessel, conducting the five adopted children whose fathers had been killed during the siege, moved forward through the crowd and entered the saloon carriage. Then Stoessel shook hands with Ijichi and turned to bid farewell to many of his officers, who were to come on by a later train, and whom he would not see again before his arrival in Russia. As he was making his way to the carriage he caught sight of a little group of men, rough and ragged, but still soldiers of the Czar. He turned towards them and offered his hand to one. It was the moment for one of those moving scenes which live for ever in story. The soldiers should have hurled themselves at the feet of their beloved General and kissed them, and then torn his coat to pieces, each man securing a souvenir. But nothing of the sort occurred. The poor soldiers, possessing little regard for their General, and totally unaccustomed to be shaken by the hand, merely gazed on his friendly advances with a look of mingled awe and stupidity. Stoessel turned on his heel and entered the train.

GENERAL STOESSEL SAYING GOOD-BYE TO GENERAL IJICHI (NOGI'S CHIEF OF STAFF)
AT CHORASHI STATION.

A strange spectacle followed, which those who were present will not easily forget, and will always recall with shame and disgust. Even third-class carriages were scarce on the Dalny-Port Arthur line—one had to be content to make the journey in open trucks; but on this occasion there was a saloon for Stoessel, with a few carriages for the women and children. When the General and his wife had entered the train you expected to see the women and children led up and assisted into the vacant seats; but immediately the crowd of generals and officers rushed forward and entered the carriages, pushing past the women and children without showing the slightest regard for them. Soon every carriage was packed with these gentlemen, and the women and children were left on the platform sitting on their luggage. The indignation of the foreigners and Japanese was instantly aroused by this final exhibition of callousness and brutality. "They treat their women like so many beasts," was the comment of one. Some of the station officials and Japanese officers intervened and assisted the helpless ones into the open trucks, which were already nearly full of officers' servants: these latter, taking the cue from their masters, had no thought of waiting for the women and children to be seated first. The women sat in the trucks, intermingled with common soldiers and the luggage of the officers. The widow of an officer killed in the siege, whose beauty might have aroused some spark of dormant gallantry in the breast of one of the Czar's chosen warriors, was left wandering about, and would have missed the train had not General Nogi's A.D.C., Captain Matsuada, cleared out some soldiers and found room for her in a truck.

Then with a last whistle the train slowly moved off,

carrying with it the true cause of Russia's downfall in the Far East, and leaving most of the women and children still seated on the platform, to await for hours the arrival of the next train. It was a miserable scene, and dissipated the last-remaining feeling of regret for the misfortunes of the garrison.

The morning of January 13, the day after the departure of General Stoessel, was fixed for the triumphal, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the formal, entry of the Japanese army into Port Arthur. One of the most gratifying features of the arrangements ever since the capitulation was the desire on the part of the Japanese Headquarters Staff to avoid anything in the nature of an appearance of triumph over the fallen foe, and therefore General Nogi had refrained from entering the town until after the departure of the late commander and the majority of his garrison. The rule he set himself was rigorously enforced on others, so that the divisional and brigade commanders, the very men who had brought about the surrender, were obliged to remain on the captured positions with their troops, and gaze for a period of twelve days on the promised land beyond, on the houses of the old and new towns, on the naval arsenal, on the waters of the harbour, and on the battered ships resting in the mud. The foreign correspondents and the foreign military attachés were also obliged to observe the same rule, and perhaps the most trying and aggravating period of the whole six months during which the siege had lasted was this spell of enforced idleness waiting for the day of entry.

The Chinese inhabitants of Liautung declared that never in the memory of the oldest inhabitant had such beautiful weather been known at that time of

the year. From December 31, the day Shojusan was taken, to January 17, when almost everybody left the front, the weather was warm and fine, and well might the thirty odd thousand Russian prisoners, who had to make long marches and undergo tiresome delays while waiting for the trains to convey them to Dalny, be thankful to a kind Providence which decreed that an almost summer sun should shine during this period. If there had been a renewal of the weather experienced in the middle of November, the suffering would have been terrible; but, as it was, the transportation of the thousands of prisoners proceeded without a hitch, and with a minimum of discomfort. It is not to be supposed that no one entered the town before January 13. Many officers and civilians and gendarmes were told off to fulfil the functions of commissioners for the purpose of taking over the public buildings and superintending the policing of the fortress. Some 5000 Russian workmen roamed at large over the city, and many Chinese and other nondescripts prowled about waiting the opportunity to steal and plunder; but except these gendarmes and commissioners on duty, no one was allowed to enter.

At first it was announced that there would be a great review of the entire army in the most level portion of the Suishien valley; but that idea was abandoned, partly because the number of the troops rendered it almost impossible to manœuvre them successfully, and also because it was contrary to etiquette to hold a big review of the nature of a triumph while hostilities still continued. A procession on a lesser scale was therefore organised, and detachments from every corps and branch of the army were ordered to

be in position on the road leading through the low ground into the city at 10 A.M. on the morning of the 13th. Each infantry regiment was represented by a company; each cavalry regiment by a troop; each artillery brigade by a battery; and even the commissariat trains, to whose lot had fallen some of the most arduous and dangerous work,—the conveying of daily supplies to the fighting line along roads fully exposed to artillery fire,—were not forgotten, and the little unloaded carts from every commissariat train, if they looked somewhat incongruous alongside the other troops, thoroughly deserved their place in the procession.

The head of the column was in position at 11 A.M., and preceded by General Nogi and his staff, the foreign military attachés, and the band, it marched slowly through the streets of the new town until it reached the main square facing the harbour, in front of the new hotel, which remained uncompleted and was used as a hospital. Here General Nogi, with his staff and the military attachés, left the head of the column and took up a position on the right-hand side of the road a few paces in front of the other officers. This was his position for reviewing the troops; the band was on the left of the road, and faced the General. Then, while a solemn march was played, the troops began to defile slowly past, each company taking the word of command from its captain and saluting as it approached General Nogi.

There was nothing very showy about this review; there was an almost entire absence of colour; the music was about as poor as one could comfortably stand; the salutes were often badly given, and many of the troops had apparently forgotten their drill, as

such a long time had elapsed since it had been required. The efforts made by the stubborn little infantrymen to conquer once more the intricacies of the German goose-step were often as ludicrous as their endeavours to keep step and march in line. Their uniforms were shabby, and sadly in need of repair; their boots were much worn, and even the rifles not very clean. The regimental buglers, who had been ordered to attend in full strength, made sad noises, in entire conflict with the efforts of the band, which got on the nerves of the Chief of Staff, General Ijichi, who often left his post to stop the discord. But, in spite of these defects, no spectacle was ever more impressive; the absence of parade effect, so essential in times of peace, only served to emphasise the hardships and exigencies of war, and showed up on a finer background what these men had just accomplished and what they had gone through during the past five months.

The spectators of this martial display were naturally limited; there were no vast crowds to shout themselves hoarse at the sight of their favourites, such as marked the return of troops through London. These quiet little men, struggling so bravely to recall the barrack-square lessons of peace, and to shake off the stern realities of the struggle from which they had just emerged, had no one to witness this their hour of supreme triumph. Only the few foreigners present, the remaining inhabitants of the town itself who turned out to witness the arrival of the men who had conquered and humiliated them, a few ladies, nurses for the most part from the still crowded hospitals, watched the procession. The audience was small indeed for a great historic event—the second entry

of the Japanese into the same fortress, under the same commander, within a space of ten years.

What must have been the feelings of General Nogi as he gazed on the scene before him and recalled a similar event ten years before? Surely the moment must have been one of supreme gratification for him. Ten years earlier he had taken the fortress in a single day with hardly any loss, and now he was entering it for the second time after a campaign of eight months, only brought to a successful conclusion by his own never-failing determination and the dogged valour of his troops.

The divisions marched past in order of their titular numbers—the 1st, 7th, 9th, and 11th, followed by the two independent Kobi Reserve Brigades. Heading the procession came the renowned commander of the 1st Division, General Matsumura, the man who assumed the command after the battle of Nanshan, when Prince Fushimi left the front. He had led the 1st Division in every engagement since then, and thoroughly deserved the reputation he enjoyed. His task had at times been a hard and a thankless one. To his troops fell the duty of clearing the Metre Range of the Russians, who had fortified almost every single hill in that vicinity. From August 13 to August 15 his division, assisted by the 1st Kobi Reserve Brigade, placed under his orders, was busy securing some of these outlying positions. The struggles continued throughout the days from the 19th to the 23rd, when the disastrous repulse sustained by the 9th and 11th Divisions on Bodai brought a respite until September. Then from the 19th to the 23rd of September a desperate struggle was waged for the possession of Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill. How the gallant

1st Regiment under their old colonel, the hero of fifty-seven combats, assaulted and took the former of these positions is an old story by now. How the troops of the 1st Kobi Reserve, assisted by the 15th Regiment, climbed 203 Metre Hill, secured a lodgment close to the top, and were then driven out by a concentrated shell-fire from ships, forts, and field-guns, has also been related. Then came a long rest for the 1st Division, if rest it can be called when troops are not actually fighting, but, in Stoessel's words, "digging, digging, digging." So heavy had been the loss of the 1st Division, and so great, it was realised, was the task before them, that three regiments, the 26th, 27th, and 28th of the newly arrived 7th Division, were sent to assist their comrades in the 1st. Of the struggle waged from November 27 to December 5 for the possession of Akasakayama and 203 Metre Hill, it is not necessary to speak. The 1st Division and its commander took their full share in the combat; they suffered terribly, but success finally crowned their efforts; the mountain was taken, and the Russian warships destroyed. No division had done more than the 1st, and no general had had a more difficult task than Matsumura. The character of the fighting, to the success of which they had so largely contributed, was attested by the condition of the regimental colours, which were carried by the ensign of the selected company. Many of them were in absolute tatters, hardly an inch of silk remaining attached to the poles, which were also riddled. One by one the representatives of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 15th Regiments, composing the division, defiled by their Commander-in-Chief, tattered, unkempt, but proud and satisfied with the work they had accom-

plished. Almost the last event of General Matsumura's career was to lead his victorious division past General Nogi. He was not destined to participate in the triumph of Mukden: on his way to the north he succumbed to the hardships and exigencies of the campaign.

Then came the 7th, the division with a splendid fighting reputation, sent in the middle of November to finish off the work commenced by their comrades in August. These were the fresh soldiers, who had not previously been in action, but were called upon to sacrifice their lives in thousands within almost twenty-four hours of their arrival on the scene of hostilities. They were led by their General, Osaka, the man who had seen 7000 of his troops killed and wounded in their very first engagement. In his train came Major-Generals Saito and Yoshida, whose reputations were made on the bloody slopes of 203 Metre Hill, where they arranged the dispositions for, and directed, the final attack. This was the division which, even after the capture of 203 Metre Hill, found no rest, but drove the enemy slowly backward on to his western forts away from Laoteshan, where he had threatened to make a final stand. One by one these splendid regiments, the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th, defiled past, followed by their artillery and commissariat carts, to make room for the 9th Division.

Of all the troops before Port Arthur, the 9th Division were the most consistently successful. Well might their gallant commander, Lieutenant-General Baron Oshima, be proud of their work, and well might the troops be proud of their General. He was immensely popular throughout the army, and was said to be destined to command an army of his own in the

north. Over and over again the General had chafed at the delays of the siege, and expressed his longing to go to the north and there find an opportunity for his division really to distinguish itself without incurring the dreadful slaughter entailed by assaults on forts. But no division and no General had earned a higher reputation. The whole of the line from Nirusan to Banrhusan East, against which the 9th Division operated, was taken by direct assault, and on only two occasions did the first assaults fail. These were the assaults on the night of August 23 against Bodai, and the attack on Nirusan on the afternoon of November 26. On every other occasion the soldiers of the 9th Division had accomplished the task set them at the first attempt. True, in August they were driven out again from Fort Kouropatkin, the work in the Suishien valley protecting the water-supply, but they retook it in September, and would have done so again in August if the whole attack had not been suspended.

To assist him in his work, General Baron Oshima had two of the best brigadiers in the army and some of the most famous fighting regiments. An impartial person, if asked who was the real hero of the siege, would at once reply Major-General Ichinohe, the commander of the 6th Brigade—composed of the 7th and 35th Regiments. The General is a fighting man; he goes into the fighting line with his men; and, according to all the usual calculations, he should long ago have been killed and buried. His brigade captured the two Banrhusan works in August by one of the most remarkable infantry assaults ever made, at the end of which only 400 men remained in the brigade, whose usual strength was over 5000 bayonets. After the capture General Ichinohe re-

mained in the captured works for a week, during the whole of which he was repelling the repeated sorties of the Russians, who were determined to recover the lost positions; but their efforts were in vain. Then in September Fort Kouropatkin was taken; after that, in October, the 18th Brigade, under Major-General Harasa, took Hachimachayama; and on October 30 the single success achieved by the Japanese again fell to the share of Ichinohe and his soldiers, who captured P Work, and, although driven out in the night, the General himself rallied the retreating company and led it back to victory. Nirusan was next taken, and on January 1 the 9th Division was the first to sweep back the enemy, stand on the captured hills, and gaze on the town and harbour of Port Arthur. Such is a brief summary of the record of General Baron Oshima and the 9th Division. No wonder the colours of those regiments were the most tattered of all, and in two cases had been replaced by new ones.

After the 9th came the hard-hit 11th Division, whose losses had been the greatest of any division, and who for many months after their successful attack on the mountains of Taikosan and Shyokosan had a persistent run of bad luck. They were called upon to attack the strongest positions along the whole line—the Keikwansan group-forts. They were also in the assault on Bodai in August, and their losses were great. On October 30 they were driven back with great loss, and again on November 26 were repulsed. On this occasion they lost their commander, General Tsuchiya, who was shot through the head, but not fatally. The regiments of this division—the 12th, 22nd, 43rd, and 44th—all suffered heavily: the 12th and 22nd were

practically wiped out. General Samejima took the place of General Tsuchiya when the latter returned to Japan, and brought a change of luck to the disheartened troops. North Keikwansan was blown up and assaulted on December 18, and the gallant General himself led his men into the breach. So if they had the worst luck and the greatest losses of all the divisions, the 11th can at least claim the satisfaction of having been the first to take one of the permanent forts. General Samejima himself led his men by the saluting-point. After the 11th Division came a brigade of the 8th Division, followed by the two independent Kobi Brigades, the 1st and the 4th; then other units of the Army Telegraph, Railway, and Army Service Corps. The divisional commanders, their brigadiers and their staffs, after they had passed the saluting-point, wheeled to the right and took up a position in the rear of General Nogi, while their troops returned to their bivouacs.

When the review was over and the last of the troops had passed from view, General Nogi headed a cavalcade composed of his staff, the foreign attachés, all the mounted officers, and a mixed body of correspondents and Russians, both men and women, through the town. Passing along the quay, a brief halt was made to gaze on the Russian warships, sunk and battered and crowded together in the most sheltered spots to escape the fire of the howitzers. Here was to be found the real cause of the continued assaults carried out at such a sacrifice, for it was the fear of these vessels putting to sea again which had dictated the policy adopted by the General Staff. If only the utter incompetence and lack of *morale* existing throughout the Russian navy had been appreciated earlier, a different course

might have been adopted. Who could take into their calculations the fact that Russian admirals would quietly sit still and allow their ships to be destroyed by an army, without making a dash for liberty, or attempting to inflict some loss on their opponents and so prepare the way for the advent of the Baltic Squadron? This is the first occasion on which a fleet of modern ironclads has succumbed to the attack of infantry. Pichegru's Hussars, who captured a fleet in Flanders, passed over the ice in mid-winter.

Although the idea of holding a great review had been abandoned for reasons I have already stated, it was thought fitting that some ceremony should be held in honour of all those who had fallen during the siege. The date was fixed for January 14, and the scene was laid on the open plain just to the north of the village of Suishien. On some rising ground an altar of the most simple character was erected; on it were placed a few offerings of food, drink, and flowers; at the foot a few large shells.

Detachments from all the regiments formed a vast hollow square about this altar, filing into the position at 11 A.M. General Nogi, accompanied by his staff, the foreign military attachés, and a number of priests of high rank, rode down to the ground about 11.30, and took up his stand in front of the altar. The scene at this time was most impressive, and made a great effect upon all present. The extreme simplicity of Japanese military displays cause them to be far more effective in time of war than functions of a more showy and elaborate character. The morning of January 14 was cold and raw; a mist obscured the view, rendering all objects a few yards away indistinct. Thus when the General was in his position before the altar to

conduct the service and pronounce the Address to the Dead, it was almost impossible to discern the dense mass of troops surrounding him on all sides. This, instead of ruining the ceremony from a spectacular point of view, only served to add to the extreme solemnity of the occasion. The Buddhist priests in their gaudy robes — the sole colour effect in the dreary surroundings — chanted in monotonous tones the prayers used in the service. When they had finished, General Nogi stepped forward to the front of the altar, and standing bareheaded with a parchment scroll in his hand, commenced to read in low tones the invocation to the spirits of those who had given their lives to their country. No one will ever forget the scene, with the simple altar in the foreground, the few offerings placed on it, the large 10-inch shells surrounding it, and the General of the army reading bareheaded this solemn address to the thousands who had perished during the desperate engagements of the past six months :—

"I, Nogi Mareski, Commander-in-Chief of the Third Imperial Army before Port Arthur, celebrate with saki and many offerings a *fête* in honour of you, officers and men who have fallen.

"This I do on the 14th day of January in the 38th year of Meiji.

"For over two hundred days and nights you have fought and toiled, facing death by fire, sword, and sickness.

"I wish to tell you that your noble sacrifice has not been in vain, for the enemy's fleet has been destroyed, and Port Arthur has at last surrendered.

"I, Nogi Mareski, took oath with you to conquer

or seek oblivion in death. I have survived to receive the Imperial thanks, but I will not monopolise the glory. With you, Spirits of the Dead, who achieved this great result, I desire to share the triumph.

"I have chosen this spot for the *fête*, commanding a view of the hills, valleys, and forts, the scene of your exploits, and stained with your life-blood. I have cleared the ground. I have erected an altar. I now make my offerings, and invoke your spirits to partake of them, and to enjoy your meed of the glory of our victory."

Nogi's two sons were amongst the fallen, but the General had repelled with almost scornful words those who would have lamented with him, not counting it a loss that these precious lives had been given to the service of their country.

The mist hid from view the thousands of soldiers surrounding the altar; the intense stillness added to the effect; all were endeavouring to catch the words of their General, and not a whisper or sound of any sort came from the assembled mass of veterans. At that moment the imagination pictured thousands of spirits of brave warriors passing through the mists and darkness towards the Elysian fields, there to join the countless millions who had perished in ages of warfare, to relate their deeds, and receive their due award of praise from the great warriors, leaders of armies in the past. Their reception was assured, their place on the scroll of glory would be second to none; the Japanese assembled to do honour to their comrades on the misty morning of January 14 could have no misgivings on that score.

While the General was reading his invocation, the

sun had been making many unsuccessful endeavours to break through the mist and light up the scene. When he had concluded, he stepped forward to the altar, and taking some incense in his hand burnt it in a little brazier placed in the centre. As the smoke of the incense arose the sun burst forth and shone upon the thousands of soldiers standing at attention with fixed bayonets; the command was given to present arms, and with one movement 10,000 men paid homage to their comrades. The spirits of the departed had passed the shades, and had been admitted to the sacred precincts of the Valhalla of Japan.

General Nogi then stepped aside, and his place was taken by his Chief of Staff, General Ijichi. There followed in succession all the senior officers of the army, the Divisional Commanders and Brigadiers, then the foreign military attachés, and then the foreign representatives of the press, each of whom, standing bareheaded, burnt incense on the altar.

Half an hour after the conclusion of the service the sun shone on a very different scene. General Nogi had invited all the officers of the army to lunch with him at 1 o'clock that day, and this party was meant to end the celebrations following on the fall of the fortress, and to mark the interval between the conclusion of the Liautung campaign and the commencement of the new campaign in Manchuria. To provide accommodation for over 3000 officers and foreigners was an immense undertaking, and naturally this entertainment had to be held in the open air, thus depending largely for its success on the caprice of the weather. Luckily the fates were propitious, and in spite of the threatening manner in

which the day had opened, the conditions were perfect for the remainder of the day and the temperature delightful.

This remarkable gathering, one of the strangest ever held, was managed in the usual Japanese manner. A portion of the village of Suishien had been divided off by a wall of canvas stuck on poles, and at the entrance a triumphal arch had been erected through which every one had to pass on his way to the tables. These tables, hastily constructed with planks and boxes, were ranged in long rows, with cross tables at the end for the use of General Nogi, the Divisional Commanders, the Brigadiers of the army, the foreign military attachés, and the Buddhist priests who had been assisting at the ceremony. It was quite impossible to provide chairs for the vast concourse of hungry generals and subalterns, so every one stood, with the exception of those at General Nogi's table, who were accommodated with benches. The fare provided was of the ordinary Japanese description. Each person had in front of him two tin boxes, which on being opened were found to contain, the one rice, the other a varied assortment of fish, meat, pickles, chicken and ham, together with many other strange articles the identity of which remained a mystery. Along the centre of the tables were great piles of rice cakes containing some sweet condiment inside. On the previous day, on my way back from Port Arthur, I had found the regimental cooks engaged in making enormous quantities of these cakes, and at the time I had wondered what they were intended for. At intervals of about a foot along the tables were ranged bottles of saki and brandy. Where this amount of food and drink, sufficient to supply over

3000 persons for four hours, had been acquired, must ever remain one of the secrets of Japanese organisation.

The party commenced in the most orderly manner, for every one was hungry and devoted themselves to the food. As the bottles of saki were gradually finished and immediately replaced, the calmness was broken by shouts of laughter, and cakes began to fly through the air. The Japanese as a nation are unaccustomed to drink in large quantities, and have not been hardened to its effects, like Europeans, by ancestral soaking. It takes very little to throw them off their customary equilibrium, but when they become excited it is in no half-hearted manner. Every one was in the best of humour. We were celebrating not only a great event of the war, but one of world-wide importance. We were meeting again our old friends, and congratulating one another on having come unscathed through the siege. Every minute some one would step up, bottle in hand, and insist upon drinking your health; then his place would be taken by another bent on the same errand, until it soon became evident that if the luncheon lasted much longer a mere handful of Cossacks might have had the whole of Nogi's officers for the asking.

At one side of the square a stage had been erected, and entertainments were held on it during the afternoon. Old-fashioned Japanese sword-dances were performed by soldiers, arrayed for the occasion in costumes of bygone ages. In order to entertain the soldiers during the enforced inactivity of the winter months, mummers had been brought over from Japan, who masqueraded and acted before the soldiers in their winter quarters. Many of the soldiers, following the

example of these actors, arrayed themselves in improvised costumes supposed to represent various phases of European life, and entertained General Nogi and his guests by their ludicrous antics during the course of the afternoon. There was one soldier in particular whose appearance was supremely ridiculous, for he was dressed up to represent a beautiful English woman, and wore an opera hat. This man, moving through the crowd with his arm resting on that of the bandmaster, aroused shouts of merriment among the spectators. All ceremony was dropped; generals, subalterns, and foreigners fraternised in the most friendly manner, and the bonds of discipline were relaxed for the time being.

General Nogi sat at the head of his table, his face wreathed in smiles, and talking to anybody who addressed him. Behind his chair a rostrum had been erected, and from this the few toasts of the day were proposed. General Matsumura, the senior Divisional Commander present, mounted the rostrum and proposed the toast of "The Head of the Army" in enthusiastic terms. This was received with loud shouts of "Banzai!" and the emptying of thousands of glasses. The Generals moved about among their subordinates without restraint. The gallant Ichinohe, an especial favourite with all, was surrounded by a crowd of admirers, who drank his health over and over again. Many of the junior officers became uproariously enthusiastic. Two of them every one will remember: they had only joined the army in the later stages of the siege, and had come straight from the military college. They had acquired the usual words of English from books, of which they were very proud, and determined to make the most of them. Putting

their heads together, they had constructed with infinite care a single sentence, and armed with this they walked about together and insisted on being introduced to each of the Europeans in turn. Directly they were introduced they filled their glasses and shouted out their sentence in unison — "Russian brave, Japanese very brave." This sentence was apparently meant as a kind of explanation to strangers why Port Arthur had fallen. At least half a dozen times in the course of the afternoon these two inseparable companions — and at this stage it was quite essential that they should have each other to lean upon—came up to me and were introduced afresh, each time uttering these historic words. On the sixth visit I ventured to reply to the salutation with another—"Russian drunk, Japanese very drunk." This was meant as a reflection upon their condition, but by this time they were too far gone; they laughed heartily, and, thinking it would be a valuable addition to their own limited vocabulary, they added it to their previous sentence, and for the remainder of the afternoon whenever I met them I was greeted with "Russian brave, Japanese very brave; Russian drunk, Japanese very drunk."

This scene of hilarious festivity was not wanting in an element of sadness, and I think all must have been forcibly struck with the absence of familiar faces and the presence of many strange ones. As long as the army remained in its trenches it was impossible to fully appreciate how terrible had been the losses during the siege. But here for the first time you saw the surviving officers assembled together, and you could judge how death had been at work in their midst. I could hardly find any of the regimental officers whom

I had known at the commencement; not a single one of my friends in the third battalion of the 12th Regiment was left—they had disappeared to a man. Another thing which must have struck every one forcibly was the juvenile appearance of most of the officers, many of whom were mere youths hurried from the colleges to fill the vacant places.

The afternoon wore on. As General Nogi and his Chief of Staff were leaving, they were lifted up and carried through the triumphal arch on the shoulders of the junior officers to the spot where their horses were waiting. After the departure of the Generals the younger officers kept up the festivities to a late hour.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE FALLEN FORTRESS.

On January 3, the day after the signing of the capitulation, I seized the opportunity to visit the captured Russian positions, and to examine at leisure the damage caused to them throughout the siege. It was as well to waste no time in seeing them, because three days after the fall of the fortress all foreigners attached to the Japanese army were placed under a most irksome series of restrictions. On January 4 orders were issued from headquarters forbidding any one to visit any of the captured Russian forts without being accompanied by a Japanese officer. We were also forbidden to enter Port Arthur under penalty of martial law, and although it would have been amply sufficient to have merely informed us to this effect, we were invited to assist in our own humiliation by signing a document recognising the penalty. The Japanese very reasonably regarded Port Arthur, after its capture, as being in exactly the same position as any other Japanese fortress in time of war. Therefore they did not care to allow foreigners to go all over the ground and make photographs of the positions they, the Japanese, might some day be called upon to defend against nations whose representatives were

present. No one complained of this; but we had good grounds for annoyance at the sudden change in our position following the fall of Port Arthur.

From the commencement to the end of the siege, except for one or two little incidents that could not be helped, nothing could have been more correct than the manner in which we were treated. On the fall of the fortress the Japanese considered there was no further need to keep us with the army by making our stay pleasant, and they no longer cared if we left to inform the world of what had happened during the siege. We naturally desired to see the Russian prisoners, and to converse with them. There could surely be no harm in this, provided we did not attempt to give away military information to those Russian officers who were returning to their own country on parole. Yet we were threatened with martial law if we attempted to converse with a single officer or man. No one, however, took the slightest notice of this latter order, and we had many interesting conversations with Russians at Chorashi Station while they waited for the trains to convey them to Dalny. There is no one more alive to his own shortcomings than the Russian officer, and the majority made no effort to conceal the true state of inward rottenness prevailing throughout their army. Many were fully aware of the precarious position of Russia in the Far East, but it was noticeable that the majority seemed to care little about it. It was obvious that very few had the war at heart. Some of the Russians were very assiduous in seeking information about the Japanese army before Port Arthur, especially its numbers; but they always desisted from their questions when you informed

them it was impossible to talk on matters involving military secrets.

On January 3, the day on which I visited the eastern section of the line of captured forts, the Japanese army was enjoying a well-earned holiday. Generals, officers, doctors, civilians, soldiers, and sailors were swarming by thousands over every fort and earthwork, examining the Russian guns, burrowing into half-destroyed bomb-proof shelters, and making their way through the barracks and caponiere galleries of the permanent forts. The soldiers routed out the property left by the enemy, which for the most part consisted of huge loaves of brown bread and empty vodka bottles, and hunted for souvenirs among the ruins. This occupation, although agreeable, was exceedingly dangerous, and resulted in many casualties. Every foot of the ground was littered with various kinds of high explosives. Unexploded Russian and Japanese shells, hand-grenades, mines, and little bags of gun-cotton were scattered about in thousands. The gun-cotton was done up in little bags looking like a Bologna sausage, and had only to be thrown a short distance to explode, with disastrous results to those in the immediate neighbourhood. However, after the months of strenuous work from which he had just emerged, the high spirits and inquisitiveness so deeply ingrained in the character of the Japanese soldier were not to be damped by such untoward incidents as the occasional death of a comrade. Every now and then a soldier would be blown sky-high by an injudicious step or a too reckless anxiety to investigate the cause of the non-explosion of a shell by the simple expedient of hammering the exterior until the desired result was obtained. Standing on any one of the

forts, five minutes would hardly elapse before a cloud of white smoke arose from some neighbouring position, followed by a report, and then you would see stretcher-bearers rush to the spot and convey to the nearest hospital the remains of an unfortunate soldier. The worst of these explosions occurred on Nirusan, where a horse conveying provisions to the front line trod on a mine which exploded, killing two men and wounding twenty others, as well as several horses. Thousands of Japanese soldiers had already passed over the spot in safety, for it required the weight of a horse to set off the mine. On Bodai I saw two Japanese gunners fooling about with an unexploded 28-centimetre shell. They were taking the screw out of it when it went off, and both were blown into the air and fell stone dead a few yards from the scene of their exploit. Over eighty soldiers were killed or wounded through their own carelessness or by accident after the capitulation. General Nogi saw his victorious army gradually dwindling in numbers although hostilities had ceased, and was obliged to issue a special order forbidding men to play with unexploded shells.

On the same day, for the first time since the August assaults, thousands of soldiers wandered about the Suishien valley, instead of making their way through the miles of trenches dug across it. Many gruesome souvenirs of the dark days of August met the eye. It will be remembered that the Japanese infantry at that time advanced across this open ground without the shelter of a single parallel, under the muzzles of the big guns, and in the teeth of the fire of thousands of sharpshooters. The remains of many men who lost their lives in those operations lay just where they had fallen, and now that the corn had

been cut they were exposed to full view. The men killed in August were clad in khaki uniforms; the extreme heat of the sun had entirely shrivelled the bodies, and all that was left was the uniform, the knapsack, the cartridge-belt, and rifle, clinging to a skeleton — a soldier fully equipped, just as he went into action in August, his flesh long since crumbled to dust. In the little dongas, and other sheltered places, dozens of these bodies lay huddled together, marking the spot where the wounded men had crawled for shelter from the iron storm. They had made their way, after being hit, to these hollows in the ground, to die a lingering death from thirst or starvation, far removed from the assistance of their comrades. All over the Suishien valley thousands of shells and fragments of steel were lying, for the Russian gunners had their one great opportunity of inflicting execution when the Japanese infantry were passing across this open ground. Entering the little valley between Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West, and ascending Bodai, the same evidences of the great failure in August met the eye. Over this ground the Japanese had advanced to the attack on the night of August 23, and the bodies of many soldiers who were killed in that engagement still remained on the hillside.

The finest view of the eastern chain of defences was to be obtained from the peak of Bodai, and what struck one most forcibly was the natural strength of the hills on which the forts were built. Strong as they appeared from the Suishien valley, it was impossible to realise fully their formidable dimensions until standing in the positions themselves. Then it could be seen how every movement of the investing army must have

been made under the eye of the garrison, who could never be taken by surprise, because they could follow any meditated movement by the signs of life in the trenches at their foot. When standing on Bodai it was difficult to understand how the Japanese infantry succeeded in storming Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West on August 22. Apparently it was possible to shoot directly on to the top of these two forts from Bodai, and therefore General Ichinohe's exploit seemed all the more extraordinary in the light of subsequent knowledge of the ground. The monstrous blunder of attempting to carry Bodai by direct assault on the night of August 23 was brought home to any one ascending the valley between Banrhusan East and Banrhusan West, through which the assaulting party made their way. The valley was completely surrounded by forts. No wonder the attack failed, with the resulting loss of life; and the generals who were responsible for it may have felt certain pangs of conscience when they saw, for the first time, into what a death-trap they had launched their infantry. The soldiers, swarming over the captured positions, must have realised that thousands of their comrades were sacrificed in vain, who might then have been examining the ground under which their bodies lay buried.

I visited the forts in succession, commencing with Higashi Keikwansan. What a record had the position! The dead had been cremated, but the signs of strife on the hillside showed clearly the desperate nature of the struggle which had raged on those slopes. The fort was sapped up to in September and October, and in the assault of October 30 the Japanese infantry managed to reach the foot of the escarpment before being driven back. On November

RUSSIAN HOWITZER AFTER ITS CAPTURE,

SHOWING THE DEAD GUNNERS LYING ROUND THE FOOT OF THE GUN.

23 Higashi Keikwansan was again assaulted, and its opponents again repulsed. On November 26 the Japanese once more attempted to storm the fort, and were again driven back. When the Japanese army made their final successful advance, Higashi Keikwansan still remained in the hands of the Russians. On the night of January 1 they evacuated the fort, after blowing up the solid concrete foundation and the two 5-inch siege guns mounted on it. One of these guns was hurled to a distance of 50 yards.

I next visited Q Work, which was only assaulted once during the siege—on October 30. The work had been left open in the rear, and it was easy to understand how the Japanese infantry had been unable to maintain the position after it was captured. Next in succession was the North Keikwansan Fort, but I have already described the visit I made to that position after its capture. Bodai, or H Work, has been too often dealt with to need further description.

Between H Work and New Banrhusan the Russians had placed their main howitzer battery, just below the crest of the hill. Each howitzer was mounted on concrete, and in a separate emplacement. Their function was to keep down the fire of the Japanese guns placed behind hills. The Japanese artillery had been concentrated upon them, and the 28-centimetre shells had put three out of the six guns completely out of action. They were an easy mark for the Japanese gunners, for whenever one of them was fired a great cloud of white smoke ascended above the hillside. One of the howitzers had been knocked from its carriage and lay on the ground; another was broken off short at the muzzle. In the emplacement of a third a gruesome sight met the eye. The Russian

gunners had been evidently loading the gun, and had placed the charge half-way into the breech when a Japanese shell entered the battery and killed the gunners to a man. They lay about the carriage, so mutilated as to be almost unrecognisable.

Deep trenches and bomb-proof shelters carried the line of defence from this battery into the rear of Fort Nirusan, to which entrance was gained by descending into the ditch by means of a steel ladder or stair. From the ditch you entered the barrack through a door. So carefully had Nirusan been constructed that the solid concrete barrack, with several yards of earth on top, had not been injured by the bombardments. From the barrack a flight of stone steps led up to the level of the interior of the fort, to a point immediately behind the second line of defence, where the big guns were mounted. The four siege guns in Nirusan had been destroyed. To the north, the side from which the Japanese had made their attack, the escarpment, which was forty feet high, had almost entirely disappeared, and masses of rock, earth, and concrete had fallen into the ditch, completely blocking it up, and making a causeway from the counterscarp galleries into the fort. Over this mass of rubbish the Japanese infantry had swept to the attack on December 28. The west face of Nirusan remained undamaged, and by examining the lines of its construction you could appreciate the herculean task set the Japanese engineers.

From Nirusan I passed down to the little valley, some four hundred yards across and thickly wooded, which separated the fort from Shojusan. The valley had been protected by wire-entanglements, and had not escaped the general destruction. The numer-

ous trees and bushes had been mowed down by hundreds of shells aimed at Nirusan and Shojusan. I ascended the east face of the hill on which Shojusan is built, and which is covered with stumps of the pine-trees from which the fort is named. The interior presented the same scene of destruction as elsewhere: smashed cannon, masses of rock, and the decaying bodies of the defenders who had been caught by the great explosion on the 31st lay about in all directions. In rear of Shojusan a covering work had been constructed on a hill rising to a considerably higher elevation than the fort itself. On the top of this hill was a house which had contained the electric machinery for supplying the searchlights, but this had been destroyed by shell-fire at the commencement of the siege. Nevertheless the Russians had utilised the cover thus provided for the erection of a battery of light howitzers. When the capitulation was signed the covering work still remained in the hands of the defenders, and Russian sentries walked to and fro along the trenches, only separated from the Japanese by a distance of a hundred yards. I went over and paid a call on the Russians, and encountered an old non-commissioned officer and a private, both of whom were very friendly and anxious to be photographed. On the side of the hill on which the covering fort of Shojusan was constructed lay the bodies of Nakamura's ill-fated assaulting party, just where they had fallen in their attempt to make a night surprise on November 26.

To the west of Shojusan is the open valley, about a mile wide, separating the eastern from the western section of defences. Through this valley the railway and the main high-road enter Port Arthur. This open ground had been very carefully fortified by three com-

plete rows of wire, at intervals of about 200 yards, and also by trenches. With Shojusan on one side and Shiyoanchisan on the other, it would have been quite impossible for infantry to have made a successful advance across this plain, which is as flat as a billiard-table and devoid of all cover. Of the western group of forts, I first visited Shiyoanchisan. These positions were perhaps stronger than those in the east, but the defences were far from completed, and the forts were signally devoid of modern ordnance. On Shiyoanchisan, in separate concrete emplacements, were half a dozen old-fashioned 6-inch Krupp guns, some of which were made in 1878 and others in 1888. These were probably taken from the Chinese. Shiyoanchisan could not in truth be called a fort; it was merely a very high and steep hill on which earthworks had been constructed and guns mounted.

From the summit of the mountain looking down on Fort Isusan, more to the north-west, it was obviously impossible for an attacking force to occupy the latter work and retain possession of it without first capturing Shiyoanchisan. In order to make up for their want of modern ordnance in the western forts, the Russians had mounted many naval guns, taken from the warships in the harbour, on any favourable ground. These included 6-inch guns, 4·7's, 12-pounders, and 3-pounders. Isusan could not boast of a single big gun; its sole artillery consisted of two naval 12-pounders and half a dozen 3-pounders. The fort was shaped like a chair, from which it derived its name, and it had a shallow cutting running along its front which could hardly be called a ditch, but which was doubtless intended to serve that purpose. The searchlight mounted on Isusan played an honourable

part in the defence up to the time of its destruction by a Japanese shell. When I entered the fort, all that remained of this once beautiful illuminator was part of the reflector and thousands of pieces of thick blue glass. The interior of Isusan had suffered but little, and was intact except for the destruction of some of the smaller naval guns. It contained a very fine barrack, which had been left by the Russians undamaged, and was full of cooking-utensils, empty trunks, articles of clothing, books, and empty bottles. A full bottle was never found in any position evacuated by the Russians.

The fort of Dianchisan was a very strong position directly facing 203 Metre Hill, and had it not been for the necessity of holding that mountain in order to protect the ships in the harbour from the long-range artillery-fire, Dianchisan would have been the proper termination of the line of defence in the west. In this fort there were no guns bigger than a naval 4·7. To the south-west of Dianchisan is the fort of Tayanko, which protects the west of Port Arthur. From Tayanko numerous smaller works carry on the line of defence towards Laoteshan. Very noticeable was the fact that the Russians had made no effort to destroy the forts in the west, or even to damage the guns, before evacuating them. Why were not the forts blown up, and the guns destroyed, before the capitulation? Was the demoralisation of the garrison too great, or did the apathy of the Russian character cause such a course to be considered unnecessary? Surely it is no small responsibility for a general to surrender a fortress intact when he might have destroyed the defences and guns without alteration in the subsequent terms.

Passing down the main road leading from the village of Suishien, Port Arthur is entered. It is divided into two sections, the new town and the old; the latter, which lies under the eastern forts, having suffered most severely during the siege. In the various bombardments many of the Japanese shells had passed over the forts and landed in the town. There was hardly a house left which had not been struck during the siege, and many had been hit over and over again, until nothing remained but heaps of ashes and charred wood. Approaching the harbour the damage was more obvious, for many of the shells aimed at the warships, crowded together under the shelter of the shore, had missed their mark and destroyed the buildings. The streets were ploughed up into great holes by the 28-centimetre shells. The house used by General Stoessel as his headquarters had escaped damage. It was built rather closer to the line of forts than most of the buildings, and thus the shells had passed over it. The Viceroy Alexeieff's house, near the naval arsenal, had also escaped destruction, though it had been damaged by one or two shells.

The naval arsenal was almost completely destroyed. Shells had entered the workshops, smashing the machinery and scattering the contents in all directions. The arsenal at Port Arthur was very complete, and the Russians had repaired all their ships from time to time with the plant at their disposal. Unfortunately there was no dry dock which could hold a battleship, and this was a very serious handicap to them. When the *Retvizan* and *Czarevitch* were torpedoed in February, they could not be repaired until a section of a floating-dock had been

sent from Russia and placed round them. In the small dock was the Russian mine-laying ship *Amour*, lying on her side. In the course of the war this vessel placed over 3000 mines in the neighbourhood of Port Arthur. Her end came in a most unexpected manner. One evening the Japanese howitzers fired three rounds, which could not have been aimed because the dock was invisible; but each one of those three shells passed through the unfortunate vessel as she lay in the dock.

By walking along the sea front by the western basin of the harbour, the new town is entered. The Russians had been busily engaged in constructing many buildings before the war commenced, and these remained unfinished, and still had the scaffolding round them. Most of the houses in this section of the town, suitable for the purpose, were utilised as hospitals, and as far as possible the Japanese refrained from shelling the hospital buildings. But naturally, with 500 guns ranged round the fortress, a good many shells were bound to go astray. During the siege the women and children lived in the new town, among the hospitals. At first there was some talk of placing them in bomb-proof shelters underground, but this project was abandoned as unnecessary. The women and children were very much frightened by the bombardments at the commencement of the siege, and would rush for cover when a shell was heard approaching. After a time the feeling of fear wore off, and no more notice was taken of the shells than of a shower of rain. I was told by Russians in the fortress that the strange spectacle might daily be seen of children playing a game in the streets which consisted of betting on what por-

tion of the town the next shell would fall, and what its size would be. For this purpose they divided the town into imaginary squares, and played the game in the same manner as roulette. The women, without exception, entered the service of the hospitals, and passed the weary months attending to the wants of the sick and wounded. As long as they acted as nurses they were entitled to receive a daily ration of bread, meat, vodka, or such other provisions as were issued. In addition to the ordinary allowance, the women and officers could buy extras at the military market, which was established for that purpose. The more substantial articles of food were fresh meat while it lasted, then salt meat, and finally horse-flesh. The horse-flesh during the last few weeks was worth two shillings a-pound, though why it should have gone to that price it is hard to say, for the Russians handed over to the Japanese 1920 horses. It was considered very nasty at first, but gradually the palate became accustomed to the taste.

Many of the civilians in Port Arthur told me that they lived in continual dread of the fortress being taken by assault, and of the town being sacked by the infuriated soldiers. The usual stories seem to have been circulated, and found credence, of the horrible cruelty of the Japanese. If the Russians had only known the real character of this people, the war might never have taken place. What better examples are needed of their kindliness of nature and true spirit of humanitarianism than the action of the Mikado in offering permission for all women and children, civilians and non-combatants, to leave Port Arthur at the commencement of the siege? Again, early in August a special commissioner was sent over

THE RETVIZAN, POLTAVA, AND PERESVIET SUNK IN THE HARBOUR.

from Japan with hospital comforts and supplies of all sorts for the use of the garrison when they should surrender. During the last two or three days of the siege the demoralisation among the Russian soldiers was very marked. A German instanced the case already related of the looting of the vodka in a Frenchman's store, and the soldiers who were sent to quell the disturbance subsequently piling arms and drinking all that was left of the vodka.

The interior of the town of Port Arthur did not excite the interest it deserved, owing to the superior attraction of the battered fleet sunk in the mud of the harbour. Everything else was dwarfed by that spectacle. In the western basin many ships had been sunk, and their upper decks just appeared above the water. In the narrow entrance of the harbour you saw the masts of the vessels which had been blown up by the Russians themselves to block the entrance. About half a mile beyond was a further line of masts: these belonged to the steamers sunk by the Japanese in their various blockading expeditions. It is almost incredible that the latter managed to get so close to the entrance, and that any one survived, for the guns of Golden Hill and Tiger's Tail could pour a plunging fire upon them. The Russians were loud in their praise of the reckless disregard of life shown by the volunteers on these expeditions. They also declared that the vessels were sunk and the lives lost in vain, for the ships were almost certain to be destroyed too far out to block the mouth of the harbour; and that even if it had been thus blocked, the obstruction could have been blown up in a single day with the means at their disposal. Who will ever forget the picture of the great battleships as they lay sunk at all angles

in the harbour? They hardly looked like ships, so twisted and burnt were the funnels and superstructure. They seemed to be the ghosts of a long-lost squadron, from which the sea had suddenly receded. The *Bayan* was the only vessel in the eastern harbour, where she lay sunk alongside the quay. That unfortunate cruiser made her last exit from Port Arthur on July 27, and her last active service was to bombard the 11th Division. Returning from this amphibious service, she had the misfortune to encounter a stray mine, either Russian or Japanese, which had managed to get loose and was floating about at the entrance to the harbour. Badly injured, the cruiser nevertheless was able to keep afloat. An attempt was made to repair her, but it was found hardly worth the while; so some of her guns were taken out and sent to other ships of the squadron to take the place of damaged ones, while others were placed on shore to replenish the vacancies in the forts.

The remaining vessels of the Russian squadron sunk in the western harbour were hugging the bank, to obtain if possible some shelter from the hills which rise close to the water at this point. Near the landing-stage was the stately cruiser *Pallada*, resting on the bottom, the extent of the damage below water being then uncertain. Above her water-line the ship was hardly injured: most of her guns had been taken out and placed on land, and if outward appearances went for anything, she would soon fly the Japanese flag. Not more than fifty yards from the *Pallada* the *Pobieda* had found a resting-place. She lay with such a list to starboard that the gunwale was only two feet above water, and it was no easy matter to walk along her deck. The decks of

all the ships had been covered with coal and briquettes to protect them from the shells, and when it was finally decided to destroy the squadron the coal was set on fire with the assistance of kerosene oil. The damage thus done was very great, for every piece of woodwork on deck was burnt to cinders. The chart-house of the *Pobieda* had disappeared; only a few twisted steel girders marked its position. The bridge was represented by a mass of twisted steel, and so great was the heat of the conflagration that the fore fighting-top was broken off a few feet above the deck, and lay hanging over the starboard side, still further adding to the list of the vessel. The whole superstructure and upper deck of the *Pobieda* had been absolutely destroyed, and will have to be entirely renewed. Gun-cotton had been exploded in each of the turrets, blowing off the tops and ruining the machinery of the 10-inch guns, which formed the main armament of this vessel and her sister ship, the *Peresviet*. The guns themselves were a mass of rust inside and out, and according to a naval constructor were too far gone to be saved. Some of the 6-inch guns and smaller pieces could be repaired. The *Pobieda* was pierced by many shot holes, some of the largest of which had been temporarily stopped up with boiler plates after the battle of Round Island. The diver sent down to examine the hull of the vessel reported one very large hole in her port side, and she was also suspected to be badly damaged on the starboard, but the heavy list of the vessel made it difficult to ascertain the extent. A Japanese naval constructor who had been over the *Pobieda* told me the damage was so severe that there was very little chance of salving her, and that even if she was raised the cost

of repairs would be so great as to make it hardly worth the trouble. Since then the *Pobieda* is reported to have been raised and sent to Japan. In all probability the Japanese will have done their best to repair these Russian vessels, even if they are never of much fighting value, for they would take a special pride in sending them on a friendly cruise to Europe at some later date, just to show the Russians how much improved they are under the new management.

At right angles to the *Pobieda*, and lying within a few yards of the shore, was the *Retvizan*, sunk deeper in the water than any of the other ships. This once splendid battleship was a mere mass of twisted steel girders and perforated funnels. The fore-turret was slewed right round, and the guns were looking towards the entrance of the harbour, as if still expecting to fire on the enemy. The muzzle of each gun rested in the water. The damage to the *Retvizan* was of a more honourable character than that to the *Pobieda*, for it had nearly all been inflicted by the enemy's projectiles. In his report of the action of August 10 Admiral Togo writes:—

"The *Retvizan* then drew out from the rest of the squadron and approached our combined fleet, coming to within 1000 yards, where she received our concentrated fire, and suffered severely."

The ship certainly had suffered severely; her superstructure and bridge were shot to pieces, and her funnels resembled sieves, riddled as they were by hundreds of small shells. Nevertheless the ship was not damaged in any vital spot during the engagement, nor were any of her guns put out of action, though one of the turrets was damaged. To wander through a deserted, half-sunken battleship is a strange ex-

perience, and the feeling is almost uncanny, as you hear nothing but the gentle swish of the water ebbing or flowing with the tide. At low tide the orlop deck was laid bare, covered with mud and shells. On entering the cabins nothing was to be seen but broken furniture, pieces of paper, and empty drawers from which the contents had been hastily withdrawn when the order came to scuttle the vessel. Ranged on the shelves were the seamen's chests, and in the lockers the flags. Scattered about on every side were to be found many strange articles, the personal property of the crew, broken rifles and crockery. Looking up from the main deck, one could see a neat round hole through the upper deck, no larger than a plate. At one's feet was a similar hole. These two apertures marked the downward descent of one of the 28-centimetre shells which passed through the upper decks and then burst inside the ship. The Japanese gunners first of all thought they had sunk the Russian ships with their shell-fire, but that was not the case. The Russians scuttled them in order to protect them from the Japanese shells, hoping that the fortress might be relieved, when they could have been raised. The 28-centimetre shells burst inside the vessels, but did not go through the bottom. The 6-inch guns of the *Retvizan* were almost all under water, and some of them were just visible, enveloped in their canvas covers, as they had been ever since August 10. Like those of the *Pobieda*, the turrets of the *Retvizan* had been blown up with gun-cotton. The chief damage to the *Retvizan* was not, however, that to her upper works. The examination by divers showed her to have no less than four great holes in the starboard side, and also one unexploded mine alongside her. She also had a big hole

in the port side. The naval constructor was not sanguine of raising this ship, and it seemed almost certain that the *Retvizan* would never grace the Japanese navy.

About fifty yards astern of the *Retvizan*, the little battleship *Poltava* rested on the bottom of the harbour, in such an upright, natural, and graceful position that it was hard to believe at times that she was not afloat. This ship was one of the least damaged below water; in fact, the naval constructor declared that she had no injury, and, as she was in very shallow water, could very easily be raised. The *Poltava* was the last ship in the Russian line during the action of August 10, and she came in for a very severe mauling at the hands of the enemy. With the exception of the *Retvizan*, no ship suffered more. One big shell struck two of the 6-inch guns placed in pairs in turrets on her starboard side, and broke them completely in half, putting the battery out of action. Other big shells destroyed her upper works, and killed and wounded many of her crew. The *Poltava* was sister ship to the *Sevastopol*, both small battleships of about 10,000 tons, but, according to Captain von Essen, very insufficiently protected.

A short distance from the *Poltava* was the last of the battleships, the *Peresviet*, which was sunk in very shallow water, and consequently showed far more of her naturally high sides than the others. The ship was very much burnt, almost as badly as the *Pobieda*, and in addition had been pierced by a great many large shells, and the holes, repaired with boiler-plates, gave her a rough, untidy, unfinished appearance. Some of her guns had been damaged, and others removed. Both of the

turrets which contained the 10-inch guns had been blown up in the same manner as on all the other ships, including the *Poltava*, so that above water there was absolutely nothing that could be utilised again. The divers had carefully examined the hull of the *Peresviet*, and reported that they could find no damage, and the Japanese therefore had little difficulty in raising her. When I left Port Arthur no examination had been attempted of the interior of the vessels below water, so that nothing was known of the condition of the engine-room and the damage done to the machinery. All this had to be ascertained later.

The *Sevastopol*, taken out by her gallant captain to face the repeated assaults of the enemy's torpedo craft, had for some time staved off the attacks of her opponents, but finally the boom had been blown up and a torpedo had found its way through the netting, striking her astern, blowing a large hole in her side and destroying the steering-gear. Then, able to do nothing more for her country, the *Sevastopol* was steered by her twin screws out into deep water, her sluice cocks opened, and she sank in 150 feet, the exact position of her grave only known to Captain von Essen and his small crew. The Japanese are unlikely ever to set eyes on her again.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

STOESSEL AND SURRENDER.

NOTHING was more remarkable in the whole course of the war than the sudden revulsion of feeling against General Stoessel and his garrison which followed the surrender of Port Arthur. A week before the capitulation, and indeed for many months previous to it, the General was hailed as the one hero Russia had produced in the struggle, and his army as the one body of men who had proved that Russia still possessed her old type of soldier. The infantry that lined the trenches before Port Arthur with such steadfast devotion to their Czar were, it was thought, worthy successors to the men who stood for hours under the concentrated fire of the French artillery at Borodino, and who hurled themselves in masses against the death-dealing and impregnable defences of Plevna. This feeling suddenly changed. General Stoessel, in the opinion of many, fell sadly from his high estate; his garrison, even if justice were done to the stubborn courage of the infantry, was no longer regarded as that band of heroes who were to go down to history in a halo of glory. What was the reason for this sudden change? Was it justified by what has come to light since the surrender, or was it the tendency

to detract so often manifested by those who criticise from a distance and who have not participated in great events? If the latter is the true solution, General Stoessel and his garrison need have no fears for their fair fame in the future, for history will do them justice, ample, if deferred, as she has so often done to the memory of others in the past.

It is to be feared, however, that history will confirm with no uncertain voice the verdict pronounced, with varying degrees of severity, by those who were present throughout the operations, and who subsequently saw for themselves the interior of the fortress, the condition of the garrison, and the state of the food-supply at the time of the surrender. Some have gone to extremes of criticism; others are inclined to judge the surrender less harshly. The truth is generally to be found between extremes, and this case is no exception to the rule. Up to a certain point the defence of the garrison can only be described as heroic. The manner in which the Russian infantry stood over and over again for hours under a concentrated shell fire, the equal of which has never been seen in war, will always form one of the brightest pages in Russian military annals. Take for instance the case of 203 Metre Hill, where Colonel Ileman made his men sit for hours in an exposed and almost undefended position under the massed fire of the 11-inch mortars and hundreds of other guns. It took the Japanese ten days of continued bombardment and repeated assaults, costing 12,000 men, to drive—or it would be more accurate to say to blow—those Russian soldiers off the hill. A single instance of such dogged courage seems to prove conclusively that the spirit of the Russian soldier remains unchanged, and that he must at once be absolved from

all responsibility for the surrender of the fortress. It is to his generals and officers that we must look for the true cause of this sudden revulsion of feeling and this widespread outbreak of adverse criticism.

What was the position of General Stoessel in relation to the fortress placed under his care from the commencement of the siege? To quote his own words, "When the Japanese made their night attack on February 8, I was astounded; for the fortifications were only half completed, and the garrison numbered barely 3000 men." Obviously, therefore, his first duty was to prevent the enemy from approaching the fortress until it was placed in a proper state of defence. To do this, it was necessary to fight a defensive campaign as far north as possible in the Liautung Peninsula. At Kinchau, the narrow neck of the peninsula offered an advantageous position. Nanshan was fought on May 26; the Russians were obliged to evacuate Dalny and take up a defensive position astride the peninsula on the high ground a few miles nearer Port Arthur; and it was not until June 26 that they were again called upon to fight seriously. On that day they lost two important positions. Then came a respite until June 26, when, after three days' hard fighting, the Russians were driven back to their last line of defence, which in turn was abandoned on July 30 in favour of the shelter of the fortifications of the town. So far General Stoessel had endeavoured to act for the best, and for two months had met with moderate success.

On August 1 the siege of the fortress may be said to have commenced, and two main problems then confronted Stoessel: the preservation of the fortress until the arrival of a relieving army from the north; or,

if relief became impossible, its preservation until the Port Arthur Squadron should be able to make good its escape to Vladivostok. At that time the arrival of the Baltic Fleet was a contingency too remote to excite serious attention.

On August 10 Stoessel saw the squadron, consisting of six battleships and three cruisers, sail out of the harbour. That morning, when they faded from view, he thought it was for the last time—he never expected to see them again; and their departure lifted a load of responsibility from his shoulders. The imperative necessity of protecting that unlucky squadron no longer oppressed him. It is therefore easy to imagine his dismay when on the following morning, August 11, the battered *Peresviet*, with the remainder of the squadron following at various intervals minus the flagship, the *Czarewitch*, once more crossed the bar and took up their old anchorage. The situation had now materially changed for the worse, and a third problem presented itself. If it was doubtful whether a relieving army could reach them from the north, and practically certain that the squadron could not reach Vladivostok, an effort must at least be made to hold the fortress until the arrival of the Baltic Fleet should once more restore to Russia her naval supremacy. The General and his garrison therefore settled down to a long and trying siege.

The news of the battle of Liaoyang dashed the last hope of speedy succour to the ground. Stoessel could only comfort himself with the reflection that his detention of a large Japanese army before the fortress had rendered that victory indecisive, and had allowed Kouropatkin a sadly needed breathing-space. In the middle of September, Stoessel was reminded on what

a slender thread the fate of the ships in the harbour hung, by the desperate and almost successful attempt made by the Japanese to take 203 Metre Hill. He no doubt warned the admirals at the time that there might come a moment when he would no longer be able to hold that hill, and that therefore the fleet must be prepared to make another dash for freedom. On September 28 the garrison received a sample of what they had to expect in the future, in the shape of the first shot fired from one of the new 28-centimetre mortars. It is impossible to over-estimate the effect made upon the Russians by the first of these projectiles. The fortifications of Port Arthur had been planned on the assumption that they would never be called upon to face anything larger than a 6-inch gun or howitzer. The advent of these veritable giants of ordnance, firing a shell five times as large as any previously used, was a terrible awakening to the garrison; for forts, bomb-proof shelters, and covered ways were all vulnerable to the vertical fire of these guns.

On October 6 the spirits of the garrison were temporarily raised by the receipt of a letter from Kouropatkin, in which he stated that he was already on his way to relieve the fortress. The battle of the Shaho was the sequel to this letter. Apparently no further authentic tidings were ever received from Kouropatkin, but the news of his disastrous repulse and the heavy slaughter of his troops filtered through the besieging lines and depressed the spirits of the defenders. With this defeat the first great reason for holding the fortress at all costs — namely, the chance of relief from the north — vanished for ever. The second, the escape of the Port Arthur Squadron to Vladivostok, was apparently as hopeless. The third,

the expected arrival of the Baltic Squadron, alone remained. This was kept before the soldiers as an inducement for them to continue to hold their ground, and they answered the call nobly on October 30, and again on November 26.

Meanwhile, what was the Port Arthur Squadron doing? According to the statements of the Russians themselves, the damage sustained by the ships on August 10 had been made good by the 1st of September, and all the battleships, if somewhat battered, were in a position to put to sea on that date. Stoessel himself, as well as the admirals, must have realised the paramount necessity of keeping the fleet ready to put to sea at a moment's notice, either to join the Baltic Squadron or else to make a final dash for freedom on the fall of the fortress. The steps taken for the achievement of this object were strange in the extreme; for towards the end of October all the crews were taken off the ships and sent to reinforce the soldiers in the forts. In addition to this, many of the guns were removed from the ships and placed on land, and the ammunition for the naval guns, already greatly reduced and now actually running short, was fired daily at the besiegers' positions and entirely wasted upon them. It is hard to believe that at the end of October any absolute necessity existed for placing the crews on shore. If it was unnecessary, such an action was inexcusable, for it at once exposed the now precious lives of the sailors to further decimation, and a ship's company would be of little use after two months of such service. This transfer of the ships' crews and guns from sea to land service shows better than anything else the unhealthy spirit and lack of moral force which pervaded

the Russian naval command. Sailors who come to a decision, months before it is necessary to decide, not to fight at sea are not worthy of the name. Yet this was the course adopted by the Russian admirals. All the fight had been knocked out of them on August 10, and after that, come what might, they were determined not to risk another encounter on their natural element. As far as I was able to gather, the Russian naval officers did not accompany their men into the trenches, and for the remainder of the siege idled their time away in the town. Surely there is no more pitiable incident in naval history than these five battleships and two cruisers riding at anchor in harbour, able but lacking the spirit to go out and face the enemy in the open, and preferring to be shot to pieces by land artillery as they lay at anchor.

On November 26 the Russian soldier again showed his mettle by resisting the most determined assault yet made on the eastern section of forts, preceded as it was by a terrible bombardment. Then on November 27 commenced a battle of giants for the possession of 203 Metre Hill: the result of this battle would decide the fate of the fleet. There was ample warning, for it took the Japanese ten days to capture the hill; but not a move was made by any of the captains of the warships to leave the doomed harbour. The single exception was Captain von Essen, who, collecting 100 men, anchored his ship under Tiger's Tail, placed a boom around her, and for several days successfully fought the Japanese torpedo-boats. On December 5, 203 Metre Hill was taken, and on the following day the 28-centimetre shells began to fall around the warships. Thereupon the ships were scuttled by the Russians, not sunk by the shells as has been stated;

for the shells exploded just inside the protected decks after passing through, and were not able to penetrate the hulls.

Again, at this crisis, General Stoessel's position may be examined. His third reason for holding out at all costs had followed the way of the other two: the Baltic Fleet would no longer gain any advantage by coming to the port. If, then, the case for holding Port Arthur to the last was comprised in or could be limited to the three reasons named, the case was closed; General Stoessel was *functus officii*. It remains to consider whether no other reasons existed; whether, indeed, there were not reasons of such great practical and strategic importance that they should have induced him to put his troops to the last test. The time had, in fact, arrived for Stoessel to prove his title, by virtue of foresight and determination, to a place in the front rank of great commanders, or else to write his name on the endless roll of mediocrity. No doubt, in the eyes of many he could find ample excuse for surrender; yet a great general, carefully considering the effect of such a course on the whole campaign in which he was only playing a part, would surely have come to a different decision. We will resume the subject after completing the narrative of events.

General Stoessel decided to surrender. He only looked for a suitable opportunity; but he could not very well take the step until the enemy had captured some of the permanent works, for it must be remembered that up to December 5 not a single one of these had fallen. From the date of the capture of 203 Metre Hill the surrender, as far as Stoessel was concerned, was a foregone conclusion. Until December 15, however, he was not really master of the situa-

tion, for Kondrachenko still lived, and the spirit and energy of that brave man made itself felt throughout the entire garrison. As long as he was present there would be no talk of capitulation among the soldiers, whatever the Commander-in-Chief might have privately decided. On December 15 the worst misfortune since the death of Admiral Makaroff occurred; for on that day the gallant Kondrachenko, together with his whole staff, ten in number, was killed by a single shell while superintending some repairs in the North Keikwansan Fort. With his death the spirit of resistance fled, but still no decent excuse could be found for capitulation. On December 18 the Japanese blew up and stormed the North Keikwansan Fort; this was followed by a similar success on December 28, when Nirusan succumbed to a determined attack; and on the 31st of the same month Shojusan also fell into their hands. This gave Stoessel the necessary opportunity for capitulation, and he seized it with an almost indecent haste, for at 4 P.M. on the afternoon of January 1 he sent his *parlementaire* to arrange a meeting of delegates. A few days before the capitulation a conference was held of all the fort commanders, and the majority voted in favour of further resistance. This decision was overruled by Stoessel himself.

What was the condition of the fortress and of the garrison on which this decision was based, and what further object was to be gained by continuing to hold out after the defeat of Kouropatkin and the destruction of the Port Arthur Squadron?

The second question can be dismissed briefly. There were many reasons for continuing the defence. Firstly, there was the prestige that would accrue to the Russian arms by a prolonged and yet more heroic defence.

Secondly, Stoessel, at the end of December, was detaining before Port Arthur an army of 100,000 Japanese troops. That Kouropatkin realised the importance of keeping this force thus occupied is apparent, for immediately on the fall of the fortress he assumed the offensive, to gain if possible a success before Nogi's troops could arrive in the north. Marshal Oyama, in his report of that action, speaks of a fifth army making its appearance for the first time: this of course consisted of General Nogi's contingent. Thirdly, every day the Japanese troops were kept in the trenches during the bitter winter months would lower the *morale* of the soldiers, and make them less ready for service in the spring. Fourthly, the same causes would entail not only great hardship and suffering, but actual loss of numbers. For these reasons there can be no doubt that if General Stoessel had held out until the spring, Kouropatkin would have been able to take the offensive with far better chances of success.

The capacity of Port Arthur for further defence, and the actual condition of the garrison, must be dealt with at greater length. That the loss of North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan fatally jeopardised Stoessel's position cannot for a moment be maintained. Even after the capture of those forts the Russians still held many strong positions along the outer eastern chain of forts which would have defied capture for a considerable time: New Banrhusan, H Fort, the mountain of Bodai, and the line beyond the North Keikwansan Fort had not been touched. All these works were abandoned, after a mere show of resistance, during the night of December 31. If these positions were left unmasked by the loss of the three

permanent forts, and it was found no longer possible to provision and reinforce them, the entire eastern section of the outer line of defences might have been abandoned. In that case the Russians could have retreated to the low hills behind, where an inner line of defence had been especially constructed to meet such an emergency. To capture this inner line the Japanese would have been obliged to go through much the same process, only on a smaller scale, as they had adopted in their attacks on the outer line. This inner line was crammed with guns from the ships, and should have been able to defy capture for quite two months, if not longer. If the inner line fell, the whole of the western group of forts would have remained, and in these a final stand might have been made. The Russians seem to have argued that the defence of Port Arthur consisted in preserving the town, which the capture of the eastern section of the inner line would place at the mercy of the besiegers. But the western section of forts was self-contained, and could have been held after the town was no longer tenable, and after the destruction of the fleet had rendered it useless. By this means a large Japanese army would have been detained on the Liautung Peninsula, an object of far-reaching importance. The Russians are themselves willing to admit that strategically the situation was far from hopeless, and that other considerations caused them to capitulate. These were: firstly, the reduction of their fighting force; secondly, the state of the food-supply; thirdly, the want of ammunition; lastly, the conditions of the hospitals.

With regard to the number of able-bodied men left in the garrison, it will be remembered that Colonel

Reiss, at the meeting of the delegates, stated that only 4000 soldiers were in a condition to march out, all the remainder being sick or wounded. If that statement had been even approximately true, further resistance was of course out of the question; but the number given subsequently swelled to no less than 26,000 soldiers and sailors, and over 1600 officers. The condition of the majority of this large force may not have been of the best, and some may have been more fit to serve in hospital than in the trenches; but the fact remains that the whole of them were able to march some sixteen to twenty miles to the railway station without showing any signs of exhaustion. From this it would seem that there is very little justification for arguing that the reduced numbers of the garrison prohibited any further resistance, more especially when it is considered that the second line of defence would have been much more contracted than the outer one from which they had withdrawn.

On the question of shortage of ammunition there was much uncertainty until the publication of the Japanese official returns. Shells of all calibres to the number of 82,670 were found inside the fortress at the termination of the siege, which works out at an average of 151 rounds for each of the 546 guns found intact. This can hardly be considered a scarcity, but even if there was a shortage in the big-gun ammunition, this was not really a very important consideration, as the defence would have to depend on rifles and machine-guns. Ever since the Japanese had been close up to the Russian lines the artillery had been of very little use, with the single exception of shrapnel-fire. At the commencement of the siege there were sixteen million rounds of rifle ammuni-

tion in the fortress, according to the Russians; and at the end of the siege over two million rounds remained. The garrison would certainly have had to economise their cartridges. On the other hand, it is almost impossible to believe that in a great arsenal like Port Arthur no facilities existed for manufacturing cartridges, and for refilling empty cases: considering the closeness of the opposing lines, a half charge of powder would have been just as efficient as a full charge. Thirty tons of powder and other explosives were taken over by the Japanese. There would seem to be no proof that the state of the ammunition supply prohibited further resistance.

As to the sufficiency of the food-supply, there is absolutely no doubt; for we have the figures showing the amount of stores counted by the Japanese commissioners after the surrender, which coincide with the statements made by the Russians themselves. In the army store-houses taken over by the Japanese military authorities were found—rye-flour, 700 tons; maize, 40 tons; crushed wheat, 80 tons; beans, 700 tons; corned beef, 40 tons; biscuits, 60 tons; salt, 400 tons; sugar, 20 tons; rice, 1 ton; and barley, 2 tons. These figures represent to a few tons the amount of food-stuffs remaining to the garrison at the termination of the siege.

In addition to the above, there were in the navy stores 700 tons of wheat-flour (captured on the *King Arthur*); sugar, 40 tons; and butter, 2 tons; to which may be added 75,000 tons of Cardiff coal, 55,000 tons of Japanese coal, and 15,000 tons of briquettes. After the surrender 1920 horses were handed over to the Japanese. The Russians say that the men did not like horse-flesh, and refused to eat it. If this is

true, no better proof is needed that the garrison were not so near starvation as they would have the world believe, for starving soldiers will eat anything. In most great sieges horse-flesh has been considered a luxury in the later stages of investment, and fastidiousness of this sort would have cost England Ladysmith, and possibly South Africa. From these facts it will be seen that ample food existed in the store-houses to supply the garrison for quite four months at full rations.

In addition to the food-supply, there remained up to the end of the siege an enormous amount of the Russian soldier's favourite beverage, vodka, which would in a great measure cause him to forget the monotony of his ample diet, albeit the diet alone was better than that which thousands of his fellow-countrymen in Russia had to be content with for their daily sustenance. Up to the very end of December the allowance of vodka per day was one big bottle among four men. On the evening of December 31, when it first became generally known among the garrison that a capitulation was about to be arranged, the soldiers broke into and looted the store of a Frenchman named Mondon, and took therefrom nine hundred cases of vodka, each containing sixty bottles. They then held a drunken orgie in the streets. A regiment was sent to quell the disturbance, but after driving off the revellers they drank the remainder themselves.

There being sufficient men, ample ammunition, and an abundance of food, the state of the hospitals alone remains to be considered as a factor determining Stoessel's decision. When the Japanese took over the hospital buildings they contained some 13,000 sick and wounded. The Russians declare that their hospitals

were in a deplorable condition, that there was a want of bandages and a complete lack of hospital comforts, and that, owing to the entire want of green food, scurvy was rampant among the troops. This is in a measure true, for there were in the hospitals over 6000 cases of scurvy. But it cannot be admitted as a rule of war that a general has any right to surrender because his hospitals are imperfect.

Moreover, Stoessel himself was largely to blame for this condition of affairs, which touches the question of food-supply as well as that of the hospitals. Incredible as it may seem, no attempt was made at the commencement of the siege to collect under military control the large private stores of food existing in the town. It is true that an order was issued to the effect that all stores of food and wine must be sold to the military authorities at rates fixed by headquarters. Some were sold; but most of the store-keepers knew how to get round this order, and in consequence, throughout the entire siege, any one possessing ready money was able to go to the private stores and buy food and wine. As a matter of fact, there was an enormous quantity of food and wine inside Port Arthur on the fall of the fortress, and when the victors entered the town they were able to purchase many luxuries, such as champagne and claret, which they could not obtain outside the town during the siege. My friends and myself were entertained in a most hospitable manner by a German firm, who at the commencement of the siege had carefully laid by sufficient stores to serve their employés for months, and as they had large surplus supplies they frequently entertained friends less fortunate than themselves. Probably few persons inside Port Arthur fared as well as my German

friends; but it seemed strange that we who for six months had been battering at the gates should eat our first good meal inside, and have the starving inhabitants for hosts.

We have now dealt with the four reasons which constituted the Russian case for surrender, or have been advanced by the apologists of General Stoessel. It is necessary to seek for some more accurate explanation than can be found in those untenable propositions. There seems to have been a singular absence of *esprit de corps* and harmonious action amongst the garrison from the very commencement. Thus, on the fall of the fortress, the military officers were for the most part not on speaking terms with their comrades in the navy, and the former were themselves divided into two groups — viz., those who approved of the surrender and those who were opposed to it. In fact, incredible as it may seem, there was far less animosity between the defenders and their conquerors than between the various cliques inside the fortress.

There were in Port Arthur, in addition to the regular troops, some 5000 Russian labourers, and these men from the first caused considerable trouble. Stoessel appears never to have realised the importance of keeping the non-military element under control. It is on those who are not engaged in the actual fighting that time hangs most heavily, and the seeds of discord and dissension that constantly spring up in that class may spread with disastrous results into the ranks of the soldiers themselves. General Stoessel stated in his interview with General Nogi that one of his reasons for surrendering was the impossibility of keeping the labourers in order. This is a strange confession for the Commander-in-Chief of a besieged town, with

authority of life and death in his hands, to make to the head of the besieging army.

Whenever a feeling of general demoralisation is found in a garrison, it can nearly always be traced to the highest in command. General Stoessel's supineness was reflected in the conduct of his officers. The civilians—not perhaps the most reliable of witnesses—declared that on the days when it was perfectly well known that an assault would be made, many of the officers were to be found parading the streets or drinking in the wine-shops, content to leave their commands to their non-commissioned officers. The latter always behaved admirably, while the steadfast courage of the private soldiers rose superior to every hardship and supplied the confidence their commanders failed to inspire.

Some have expressed surprise that Stoessel did not make an effort to cut his way through the iron wall around him for the sake of saving Russian honour, and, if possible, of inflicting some damage on the enemy before he surrendered. It is difficult to say if this plan was feasible. Of course, escape was out of the question; but he might have collected together some 15,000 of the fittest men in the garrison, fed them up for two or three days, and then have made a great attack on the extreme east of the Japanese line. There were far fewer Japanese at that point than at any other, for they had not attacked in this quarter. If such a sortie had been pressed home, and the Japanese line pierced, Stoessel would have gained the south road to Dalny, which passes between Taikosan and Shyokosan. In order to harass his march the Japanese army would have been obliged to make a complete change of front, some of the regiments being over twenty miles away. The artillery in fixed posi-

tions facing the fortress could not have been easily moved, and before any adequate force could have been collected against him Stoessel would have been well on his way to Dalny. He could have left a rearguard on one of the many fine positions along the road, while he himself, with the majority of his men, hurried on to Dalny and burned the vast accumulation of provisions collected there. He could then have surrendered at leisure. All his women and children could have been left in one of the western forts, with a sufficient guard to ensure their protection until proper terms could be arranged. Possibly he would not have succeeded in breaking through the Japanese lines; but if he failed no harm would have been done, and he would at least have raised the prestige of the Russian arms. Whether he failed or whether he succeeded, it would have been asking no more of the Russian troops than General Osman asked of the Turkish soldiers at Plevna, when, shut up in the town with no hope of relief, that brave man preferred to hurl himself and his army on the enemy and make a final effort to escape.

If Stoessel's action must be severely criticised, it is a relief to turn to Kondrachenko, the man whom all admire and applaud. This intrepid engineer, in addition to having built nearly all the fortifications, was the life and soul of the defence. He was always to be found where the fighting was hottest, encouraging his men or superintending the repair of damaged works. It is more than probable that had Kondrachenko lived, Port Arthur would have continued to turn a determined face to the enemy, for the soldiers would always fight under this man—the commander of the fortress in all but name; but on his death the backbone was taken out of the defence.

Port Arthur, if compared with other sieges, reflects little credit on the Russians. The strategical situation was much the same as that of the French in Genoa one hundred and four years ago. There Massena, shut up in the city with very little hope of relief, and besieged by an Austrian army under Ott, nevertheless realised the importance of holding the town to the very last minute in order to give the First Consul time to cross the Alps and attack the main Austrian force under Melas at Marengo before the latter could be reinforced by the army besieging Genoa. Massena was in Stoessel's position, Melas in Marshal Oyama's, and Napoleon in that of Kouropatkin. Massena was finally obliged to capitulate before the battle of Marengo, but he did not do so until the French soldiers had actually eaten their boots and saddles, or before 5000 Austrian prisoners and 20,000 of the inhabitants—men, women, and children—had died of sickness and starvation. The action of the intrepid Marshal gave Napoleon the necessary breathing-space, Melas was defeated, and Italy saved. If General Stoessel had been a man of real determination, or a man who could look into the future, he would have been guided by exactly the same considerations as influenced Massena at Genoa. He would have sacrificed himself and his garrison for the benefit of Kouropatkin, and saved him from the pressure of Nogi's army until the rainy season set in. The Russians in Port Arthur had ample provisions to last them for four months at a very moderate estimate, and if the absolute necessity arose they might have been placed on reduced rations for a time. Other troops have been content with half or even quarter rations before now. But where a Massena will eat a

saddle a Stoessel will refuse bread and horse-flesh; the result is surrender. Had Stoessel been in command of Genoa the history of the world might have been changed; and although it is absurd to argue that he should have had the same confidence in Kouropatkin's ability to beat the Japanese in the spring as Massena had in Napoleon's ability to beat the Austrians, nevertheless it is the duty of a commander to base his every decision on the belief that his side will be successful in the end.

General Stoessel had a magnificent opportunity of making one of the greatest defences in history with the splendid material at his command. Any General possessing soldiers who could and would fight as the Russian infantry fought on 203 Metre Hill should have been able to hold the fortress until the last biscuit had been eaten and the last cartridge fired. Stoessel, however, had not the character to gain the confidence of his troops or the energy to seize this glorious opportunity. What will be the final judgment on his conduct? The General will be saved from odium by the heroic conduct of his soldiers, by the surprising fury of the attacks, and by the destructive nature of the bombardment throughout eight months of almost continuous fighting. Nor will he lack the support of those humanitarians who applaud any action which saves bloodshed. But those who look beyond the immediate environment; those who attempt to discern the effect of the present on the future; above all, those who banish all considerations from warfare except the attainment of final success,—will find in the General's conduct little evidence of that far-seeing ability and broad-minded patriotism which alone could save his country at such a crisis.

CONCLUSION.

The Siege of Port Arthur cannot fail to rank as one of the most memorable of modern times, if not indeed in military history. If we take July 31, the date on which the Russians were driven within their line of permanent fortifications, as the commencement, and January 2, the day on which Stoessel capitulated, as its close, the siege lasted exactly five months. Dating from the battle of Nanshan, May 26, the first occasion on which the garrison of Port Arthur was engaged, the siege lasted over eight months. Throughout this period 150,000 men, comprising the picked troops of two nations, fought for the possession of some of the most formidable works which the modern engineer has devised.

It is not often that the fall of a fortress has much bearing on the success of a campaign. It is simply the termination of a series of operations directed to secure a certain result, and the actual capitulation, however satisfactory to the victors, has but little effect on the issue of the war. With Port Arthur the case was different; the interests at stake were of paramount importance to two great nations, and were bound to affect indirectly almost every other Power. The fall of Port Arthur involved the destruction of the Pacific Squadron, which finally settled the question of Eastern Asiatic supremacy. If 203 Metre Hill had

not been captured, and if Stoessel had held out four months longer, the union of that squadron with the Baltic Fleet would have been probably an accomplished fact; and who could foretell the result of an engagement between Togo's fleet and the combined Russian squadrons? Yet had Russia's affairs only been managed with the most ordinary common-sense this problem would have confronted Japan.

If Stoessel is to be blamed for his premature surrender, far more blame must attach to those who failed to prepare for war. Especially should Russia have sacrificed every other consideration to render Port Arthur impregnable. Had this been done, the Pacific Squadron might have remained at anchor until the Baltic Fleet appeared on the scene. No nation was ever provided by nature with a finer defensive position, and no nation ever took such poor advantage of her opportunities. If a tithe of the time and money spent on making a seaside resort of Dalny had been devoted to the proper defence of Port Arthur, how different might have been the peace which followed the conclusion of the war. If the Russians had fortified the line from Louisa Bay to Taikosan, they could have delayed the progress of the Japanese saps against the forts for months. If the main line of defence had been protected from end to end by permanent forts such as North Keikwansan and Nirusan, the fortress might never have capitulated, or at least not until after the arrival of the Baltic Fleet. When we consider the desperate character of the fighting which was required before even the most isolated and ill-protected positions were carried, it is easy to understand the price Russia paid for the lack of adequate precautions.

It is difficult for those who were not in the country to appreciate the load of anxiety which weighed down the naval and military authorities, and oppressed the people of Japan until the vessels in Port Arthur were finally destroyed. This feeling can best be realised if the series of tremendous frontal attacks, carried out at enormous sacrifice of life on positions that could only be taken by the slow process of a regular siege, are recalled to mind. On three distinct occasions the feeling of despair was so great that the authorities called upon the men to endeavour to snatch a victory even at the cost of annihilation. Finally after three frontal attacks on the eastern section of the line had failed, the indomitable chiefs turned their faces to the west to seek salvation. They found it in the capture of a single hill; and although the price paid was terrible, amounting to over 10,000 men, the Russian fleet was destroyed. After the capture of 203 Metre Hill, Port Arthur played but a secondary part in the campaign; but even then Stoessel could have given it a new importance, and perhaps have saved Kouropatkin, had he held out for another two months.

The ferocity, courage, and determination displayed by the combatants on either side are almost without a parallel. The horrors of the struggle seem to belong rather to a barbaric age than to the twentieth century. The miserable fate of thousands of wounded, who, had they been attended to, would have been saved, will ever form a dark page in warfare. The struggle was rendered intensely interesting by the fact that the Japanese endeavoured to combine modern weapons and methods of destruction with obsolete formations in attack. The result was unprecedented carnage; and we have probably witnessed these old-

fashioned assaults on forts for the last time. It is true that before the outbreak of the war critics had declared such methods impossible, but then all critics reckoned without the Japanese. After the lesson of Port Arthur the Japanese are never likely to attempt such assaults again. No other nation will repeat the experiment, because men could never be relied on to advance under such conditions. Again, the ordnance employed far exceeded in weight and destructiveness anything seen in war before. Who can forget the 28-centimetre shells as they burst in showers over the Russian positions, or the concentrated artillery-fire of 500 guns just preceding an attack? Such sights are only seen once in centuries, and form a priceless recollection to those who were fortunate enough to witness them. Almost every expedient mentioned in the pages of Josephus, during the Siege of Jerusalem, was brought into use by both besiegers and besieged: tunnels, scaling-ladders, drawbridges, masses of rock, pointed stakes, pits of fire—all were there, and all played their honourable part. But to these old-fashioned methods were added the additional horrors which modern science has developed for the destruction of man: hand-grenades, torpedoes, electric wires, search-lights, and above all mines, which in a few seconds destroyed entire works and hundreds of men.

The followers of armies in the field have plenty to interest and to command their attention; of the actual fighting little is seen. This was the almost invariable experience of those who accompanied Oyama to Manchuria. They saw in the distance clouds of smoke, and long lines of men spread out over an immense front, better seen at manœuvres. Before Port Arthur it was different; there everything was laid out on a

raised stage. You could occupy a stall (in one of the trenches) in as close proximity to the footlights as desired. If one did not care to pay for a stall by coming under a never-ceasing rifle and artillery fire, a seat could be occupied in the dress-circle on the hills behind. From the stalls everything was visible. The movements of the men of the besieger's army, and very often those of the besieged, could be followed. Individual soldiers could be picked out, and their movements watched in attack, from the time they climbed over the friendly wall of sandbags until they closed with the enemy or were laid low by a bullet; one could see men fall wounded, watch them crawl to cover in shell holes or inequalities of the ground, shoot and bayonet one another, and follow the great shells in the air. In fact, little or nothing that the combatants themselves could witness was hidden from the man in the stalls, who also saw much that was beyond their purview. It is almost hopeless to attempt to depict the scene. From the hills overlooking the Suishien valley, the eye rested day after day on a picture awe-inspiring in its grandeur: the plain seared with earthworks; the grim line of forts; the shells from hundreds of guns which burst over them; the glimmer of the sun on thousands of bayonets; the bursting of hand-grenades; the huge upheavals of *débris* as mines exploded; the massed battalions as they flung themselves like mighty waves against the forts, to fall back broken and scattered like surf. Beyond the forts the smoke of the doomed city rose slowly to heaven, and the blue tranquil sea made a strangely peaceful background to the warlike land. Far out the ships of the Japanese fleet patrolled day after day, night after night, the entrance

to the harbour, there to wait and hope for the exit of the Russian squadron. Safe enough they seemed on the calm water; but all around them, a few feet below the surface, were thousands of deadly engines of destruction capable of sinking in a few seconds the most powerful ironclad.

When night cast her friendly pall over the scene of strife the sight was even grander. Then the searchlights cut great lanes of pure white through the surrounding gloom, as flitting from hill to hill they lit up for a moment position after position, battery after battery, seeking to discover the approach of the dreaded infantry. Between the intervals of light the beautiful blue star-shells burst in thousands. Stranger than all was the effect when the searchlights were pointed heavenwards, sweeping the sky as if to pierce the clouds, and light the pathway of the departing spirits. Night brought no cessation to the combat. From out of the gloom which encircled the trenches came, hollow and mysterious, the never-ceasing crackle of rifles, the mournful dirge of the machine-guns, and the deep diapason of the big howitzers, which echoed over hill and valley.

The importance of the results which accrued to Japan from the capture of Port Arthur have been already pointed out, but in addition to its effect on the war, and on the larger question of Eastern Asiatic supremacy, the material spoils of the fortress were immense. These may be enumerated: 59 permanent and semi-permanent positions; 546 guns of all calibres and 35,252 rifles; 82,000 shells and 2,266,800 rounds of small-arm ammunition; over 6,000,000 lb. of flour-wheat, biscuits, salt, beans, barley, maize, rice, corned beef, and sugar; 75,000 tons of Cardiff and 55,000

tons of Japanese coal; 15,000 tons of briquettes; 1920 horses. Four battleships, 2 cruisers, 14 gunboats and destroyers, and 20 other vessels were captured or destroyed. The prisoners taken included 8 generals, 809 officers, 22,434 non-commissioned officers and men; 4 admirals, 301 naval officers; 500 civil officers; 4500 sailors and marines; 3645 non-combatants; 13,000 sick and wounded.

It cost General Nogi's army 89,000 men in killed, wounded, and sick to accomplish this result, or, if we include the battle of Nanshan, 94,000. Of the former total 64,000 were officially reported killed and wounded, the remaining 25,000 sick, or dead from sickness. The actual number of men killed on the Japanese side has never been officially reported; but when the peculiar nature of the operations is considered, and the very large number of wounded who were never brought in, the killed can hardly be placed at less than 25,000, and may have largely exceeded that number. The casualties among the officers were enormous, and amounted, it is said, to 10,000 in the course of the siege. If we omit the 5000 losses sustained at Nanshan, and if we take off another 6000 which represent those incurred in driving the Russians into the permanent forts, it will be seen that during the actual siege—that is, from August 1st to January 1st—the Third Army lost on an average 560 men, or more than half a battalion daily. Every hour the siege lasted 23 Japanese soldiers were buried or conveyed to hospital; every third minute for a period of five months a casualty occurred in the ranks. There are many who place the losses in excess of those officially reported, and no doubt a great number of slightly wounded men were not included in the returns.

The exact loss sustained by the Russians during the siege is uncertain, as the returns were not forthcoming. Roughly, 10,000 men were reported killed or died of sickness; 13,000 sick and wounded were found in the hospitals taken over by the Japanese, but many thousands of men were wounded more than once, and thus no correct estimate can be made.

The lessons learned and the experiences gained during the siege of Port Arthur will have a great influence on the future of warfare in many branches of military science, such as the artillery, telephones, balloons, transportation, the use of explosives, and engineering. The great fact which stands out above every other is, that the spade still reigns supreme, and, given time and money, it ought to be possible to make any position absolutely impregnable to attack. To obtain an idea of what the Japanese had to overcome, examine the sections of Fort Nirusan and the North Keikwansan Fort. They will give a fair picture of what an attack on a permanent position means; but it is necessary to add several additional lines of entrenchments and wire entanglements, a railway embankment, and then an open plain, to include all the obstacles which had to be surmounted. The principal positions attacked by the Japanese numbered twenty-one in all, and this works out at an average of over 3000 men killed and wounded for every permanent or semi-permanent work assaulted.

World-wide interest has been aroused in the comparatively unknown people who achieved this great result, and in two short years upset every preconceived theory pertaining to the Orient; who staggered the pride of every Western nation by the defeat and humiliation of one of their number. What are the

leading characteristics of this remarkable people, as shown by the conduct of the troops in the field? The Japanese are an extremely intellectual race, and among the lower classes the level of intelligence seems to be higher than in other races. Externally this superiority is stamped on the countenance. A residence amongst them long enough to become accustomed to their cast of features causes one to be even struck by their good looks.

They are a very cunning race, and possess wonderful resourcefulness, while their ingenuity in devising new means to a new end must always command admiration. I will quote one of many examples which came under my notice. Near the centre of the eastern line of defences at Port Arthur the Russians had erected on one of the hills close to the Chinese Wall a cooking station to supply the garrisons of that section. It could only have been intended for use in time of peace, for such a conspicuous object would be one of the first marks chosen by the besiegers' artillery, and was bound to be destroyed by half a dozen shots. Yet, remarkable though it may seem, this cooking station still stood at the termination of the siege, while every yard of ground in the neighbourhood had been ploughed up by shells. As it never was struck, it gradually came to have quite a reputation as a health-resort among the Russians, who could frequently be seen to enter it. The immunity of this building was part of the Japanese plans. At the very commencement of the siege a Japanese officer discovered that from Taikosan he could see quite clearly into it, and with the aid of a powerful telescope could make out what the cooks prepared for dinner. When this fact was reported, the gunners were ordered to leave this particular building unmolested, so

that it might continue to serve as a guide to the state of the garrison's food-supply.

The intense desire of the Japanese to pick up knowledge and information is another remarkable trait. The officers and soldiers are equally ready to study in peace or war, on the battlefield as well as in the camp. There was a certain battery of siege-guns officered by a captain and a subaltern, both of whom could speak a little French but not a word of English. They were very anxious to acquire a few words of the latter, and every time I visited them they adopted the following procedure. Alongside the guns was a bomb-proof shelter dug in the ground. We would enter this; the two officers would produce paper and pencil, and start some subject in French. I had to write the equivalent of the French word in English, while they wrote it in Japanese, but in English characters. We would then endeavour to acquire the correct pronunciation, and the Japanese carefully learnt each word by heart. If the battery was in action at the time, the officers would take it in turn to leave the bomb-proof and go outside to direct the fire of the guns, and then return to copy out of his companion's book any word he might have missed. This desire to learn on the part of the officers takes the form of extreme curiosity with the men. Whatever ill-feeling was aroused amongst foreigners by the actions of certain officials, no one brought into close touch with the private soldier can have but praise for him. Who will ever forget the smiling childish faces of the men, with good-humour written on every feature, who gathered round strangers to examine their clothes, almost pulling them off their backs in order to investigate the lining or material? Their love of fun and a joke is proverbial; many examples might be quoted.

These private soldiers, with their playful childlike ways, would be transformed a few hours later to demons ready to go anywhere or to do anything.

The Japanese are a very kind and humane race. One of the most remarkable features of the struggle before Port Arthur was the manner in which they fraternised with the Russians at the capitulation. There was hardly a trace of ill-feeling after six months of bloody strife in which even the Red Cross was not respected.

After all, the most striking fact about the siege was the sustained heroism displayed by the Japanese soldiers—a heroism never excelled, and seldom equalled, in the history of warfare. Every nation has at some time possessed troops capable of performing gallant actions, but I question if any nation has ever produced men who could repeat such feats of bravery as were witnessed before Port Arthur for a continuous period of six months. We are naturally proud of incidents in our own history, such as the charge of the Light Brigade, celebrated in prose and verse; but the story of the Siege of Port Arthur is the story of a succession of charges of the Light Brigade, made on foot by the same men over and over again, with the scientific destructiveness of modern weapons thrown into the scale.

It has been often pointed out how difficult it is to rely on men to advance against positions which they have faced month after month at a short distance. The enemy's works become magnified out of all proportion in the distorted imagination of men who are ever haunted by the knowledge that sooner or later they will be called upon to deliver an attack. Yet the Japanese troops lived for five months within fifty yards

of the Russians, and could always be relied on to attack. What is it that impels 100,000 men in the prime of manhood, and with the joy of life in their veins, to advance time after time to wellnigh certain destruction; to live for a long period in the narrow confines of a trench; to listen hour after hour to the sharp pock-pock of the bullets singing overhead; to run the risk of being shot owing to an injudicious step; and to hear only a few feet away the continual and dreadful explosions of shells and grenades? To look forth on such a scene as greeted the Japanese soldiers when they pulled aside the stones to gaze through the loopholes required the soundest nerves. They saw thirty or forty yards away formidable lines of earth-works which bristled with marksmen, and higher up permanent forts protected by every device of the modern engineer—wire entanglements, mines, *chevaux de frise*, and rifle-pits. This was the outlook after a sleepless night spent in the polluted atmosphere of decaying bodies, disturbed by continual sortie, by mine and counter-mine, and the cries of wounded men left between the lines.

Such an existence is bad enough, but life is rendered infinitely worse if you are beset by the knowledge that at any moment a bell may summon you to the telephone to receive the order to jump over the friendly wall of sandbags into the zone where for days you have heard the bullets sing and the grenades and shells burst. The men in the front trenches lived every hour under sentence of death. The condemned criminal knows that the law will dispatch him quickly and painlessly; they had not even that satisfaction. To the fortunate death might come quickly, but thousands knew that to them it must come in varying degrees

of pain and horror — from thirst, starvation, or the slow death of the wounded man left lying on the field.

There is a prevalent idea that the Japanese soldier must not be judged by the same standards as other soldiers; the remarkable character of his courage and endurance has given rise to a belief that there is something almost supernatural in his nature. My experience has been that they possess the same characteristics and are animated by the same impulses. I have frequently heard the remark made, "The Japanese soldier does not mind sacrificing his life; he does not fear death; it is a positive pleasure for him to die for his country." This is an exaggeration. There never has been a race of men who really enjoyed sacrificing their lives for their country, or for anything else. When all is said and done, if you throw away your life, what else remains? There is nothing peculiar in the Japanese temperament or in his religion to tempt him to do so. If he was endowed with supernatural qualities in this respect, no credit would result to him from the heroic actions he has performed in war. In reality he is a very ordinary person, like the private of most other armies—ready to do his duty because it is his duty, fond of comfort and good living, and anxious to return to his country to receive the praise of his friends for the deeds he has performed. At various epochs in the world's history almost every great nation has been able to boast that she possessed the best soldiers. At one time it was the Macedonian Phalanx; at another the Roman Legionary; at another the Archer of England; at another the Pikeman of Spain; at another the Swede of Charles XII.; and in later times the French Revolu-

tionary soldier, or our own Peninsula Veteran, to whom Napoleon awarded the palm.

If we could unearth the contemporary records of remote periods, we should probably find the same supernatural virtues attributed to the conquerors by those who were at a loss to account for their own defeats. Yet in nearly every case the superiority of the soldiers of a particular epoch can be explained by a combination of circumstances, which act on the nation and on the individual in some way which renders the soldiers invincible. The palm is generally held for a very short time, and has then to be passed on to some other aspirant. At present it rests in the undisputed possession of the Japanese. There are no soldiers who, by their behaviour in the field during recent years, can compare with the soldiers of Japan in sustained courage, devotion to duty, and hardihood.

England a century ago, when we reached our zenith as a fighting race, produced men of perhaps equal prowess. The soldiers who stormed Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, or the heights of Busaco, were of the same stamp as those who died in thousands round Port Arthur.

How, then, does the Japanese soldier differ from the soldiers of other nations, and why was he so invincible during the late war? To put the matter shortly, before going into details, Japan as a nation is still climbing towards the high-water mark of modern civilisation and luxury. She has not yet reached the point at which the primitive virtues of man begin to decay. The Japanese undertake the duties and hardships of a soldier's life because the state compels every man to share in the defence of the country, whose citizen he is. An examination of the events leading up

to the late war will at once show how powerfully it must have appealed to the people of Japan, and with what whole-heartedness they entered into the struggle. Soldiers fight their best either for some great personality at their head, appealing to the imagination; or for some great national cause. History shows examples innumerable of the prowess of troops who fought for great leaders or for great causes. The Macedonians under Alexander the Great followed a chief; so also did the Carthaginians under Hannibal. When the leaders disappeared from the scene, Macedonia and Carthage sank into obscurity. The Swedes likewise, under Charles XII., followed an individual rather than a special ideal. On the other hand, the Revolutionary soldiers of France fought for a cause; so did the soldiers of Napoleon in his early campaigns, but the cause was afterwards absorbed by the personality of the individual. The war between the North and the South, where both sides were animated by the national issues involved, was waged with unsurpassed fury.

The Japanese fought for a national issue appealing to the most simple-minded, and were buoyed up by the additional incentive, for they had as head of the state a great personality in the Mikado. The Emperor of Japan is head of the State, both civil and spiritual. Formerly he was the spiritual head, having his seat of government at Kyoto, while the civil duties were relegated to the Shojun at Yeddo. When the Shojun voluntarily resigned his power, the Mikado became ruler both *de jure* and *de facto*. It would be only natural to suppose that the spiritual character of the Mikado's position would have suffered by the merging of the spiritual with the political, and from the fiercer light which was bound to shine upon the throne. But ap-

parently this has not been the case, and the Japanese people reverence their Emperor in a manner positively refreshing in this purely material age. Every victory of the war was attributed by Admiral Togo and by Marshal Oyama to the virtues of the Emperor and of his ancestors. Yet it is hardly to be supposed that Oyama and Togo consider the Emperor to be different to any ordinary man, or that there is some spiritual side of his character which cannot be understood by them. The humble soldiers and sailors, who see their renowned commanders attribute every success to the Emperor, are quite content to do the same. The result was that a message of thanks or praise—and this was sent only on very great occasions, and did not follow every time a trigger was pulled, as is the case with most imperial messages—acted on the soldiers in the same manner as a divine message would have acted on Cromwell's Ironsides. This concentration of the mind on one man, a living image, who bestows praise or blame from the steps of a throne which represents in the popular imagination the summit of all earthly and celestial power, is a high incentive for the soldier in the hour of battle.

This is the side of the question as it affects the mind of the individual. I am inclined to think that far too much importance is attached to the mental condition of the Japanese soldier when his remarkable and systematic success is considered, and too little in reference to the splendid physical qualities of the race.

Mens sana in corpore sano; it is to the national life of Japan that we must turn for the true explanation of their astonishing prowess in the field. The soldier is put to the severest test when his nerves are strained for a long period, and no amount of patriotic feelings

or imperial messages will help the nervous man when he is about to leave cover and advance against the enemy's positions. What thoughts are uppermost in a soldier's mind just before an assault which may mean his annihilation? Does he think of his country or his Emperor or his family? The good soldier's thoughts are concentrated on far more petty and local matters,—some peculiarity in the ground in his immediate front, some action on the part of one of his comrades, some movement of his officer, the memory of his last meal, or what he intends to do on the following day. He will think of such things, but those more nervous will be oppressed by horrible forebodings, wild ideas will flash through their minds, frantic hope and the most unutterable despair will alternate until they are in a state bordering on hysterics. It is uncertain, and depends entirely on what impulse is uppermost in their mind at the moment the advance is sounded, whether they will attack bravely or run away. No amount of patriotism or imperial panegyrics will assist a man in that condition. It is not the mind but the bodily condition which is wrong, and patriotism will never cure physical disability. Therefore when it comes to actual fighting it is the man's nerves alone which count, and the condition of his nerves depends on the life of his ancestors and the state of civilisation his country has reached.

Few will deny that the improvements, or the so-called improvements, of civilisation have a disastrous effect on the physique and stamina of a nation; and as a race declines physically, so also does it decline in courage, determination, and warlike prowess. The Japanese are undoubtedly the finest race physically

that exists—not in point of actual size, for they are extremely small, as is well known, but as regards their physical qualities; size does not in any way enter into the calculation. They are very thick-set and well-made, especially about the legs, and are a perfect height for soldiers. Their training makes them very agile and quick on their feet. To see a Japanese soldier jump is a revelation. They bear pain in a manner extraordinary to Europeans, and this is generally attributed to Oriental stoicism; but I do not think this is an adequate explanation. Among Europeans a stage is reached where it is impossible to bear further pain without some expression of the feelings, but this I have never seen with the Japanese. They have not the same high-strung nervous organism of Europeans. The Japanese can bear fatigue better than any other race; they are able to exist on far less; and, with the exception of beri beri, are less liable to those diseases which decimate armies on campaigns, and are more fatal than bullet or shell.

What is the explanation of their superior physique? For centuries the soil of Japan has supported an immense population, and the people have been obliged to live in the most frugal manner, or starvation would have stared them in the face. At all times there has been but little money in the country to spend on luxuries, and the simple life has made them a hardy people, able to meet the greatest trials and privations with indifference, as their ancestors have done before them. The Japanese troops, therefore, go into action in the pink of condition, and courage largely results from good health. Some animals are rendered cowardly by illness, and it is the same with individuals. No man will do himself justice, in extreme peril, if he be

not well, and the healthier men are sent into the field, so much the better will they fight.

It has often been remarked how quickly the Japanese become intoxicated, and this has been quoted in derogation of the national character of the people; but in reality it proves one of their strongest characteristics—their great moderation. So unaccustomed are the bulk of the nation to strong drink in any form, that a mere glass of saki or beer will raise their spirits to a remarkable extent. The nation is not so saturated by generations of soaking that large quantities of drink are required before any change in their condition becomes manifest. This is of the very highest value, because it causes the soldiers in the field to maintain an even temperament under all conditions of prosperity or adversity, and above all to remain cheerful.

If soldiers are accustomed to face hardships in times of peace, the changed conditions in war pass unnoticed by them. The food of the Japanese army on campaign is far better than what the majority of the men have known at home. The entire absence of a sense of hardship keeps the soldier cheerful and willing in the field. The individual accustomed to beer from birth maintains his normal spirits through life by a continual use of this or other beverages. I do not mean to say that under ordinary conditions of life this use is injudicious; and perhaps little or no harm is done so long as the conditions are normal. It is only when these are for the time being abandoned, and the individual is faced with the hardships and trials such as appertain to military life, that the trouble commences. The absence of the customary luxuries causes the spirits to sink, the mind takes a mournful tone, and this has a detrimental effect on the health,

which weakens the determination and courage. Cheerfulness is one of the most remarkable traits of the Japanese character, and is one of the greatest assets he possesses.

The Japanese soldier, when he sets out for a campaign, is for all practical purposes dead to his home life and to his friends. He is not to be expected unless he turns up. The recent famine in Japan was largely caused by the reckless manner in which the people spent their savings on farewells to men who were called upon to go to the front, whom they never expected to set eyes on again. Who ever saw a tear shed on the departure of a battalion of Japanese troops for the front? The mothers, wives, sisters, and children of the departing warriors came to the station to bid them farewell, but the sacrifice they made was a willing one to their country's necessity, and they were not there to lament. No doubt they would have been happier had their friends and relatives not been called upon to fight, but it was all part of the ordinary routine and business of life, and there was no object to be served in showing distress. The Japanese soldier also displayed no unmanly regrets. He was as cheerful as ever, and the great secret of his success is the fact that each man carries his Waterloo-Station enthusiasm into the field with him, and maintains it until he is either killed or returns to his native land.

The bands and cheering crowds which give the European soldier a send-off on his departure to the front inspire him with the most heroic feelings; but directly the vessel is out of sight of land, or when the campaign has really commenced, thoughts of a very different description arise.

There is surely a great national lesson to be learnt

from a close study of the conduct of affairs in Japan during the recent war, and especially by an examination of the ten years of preparation which alone made that war possible. How unfavourable to ourselves is the comparison between England and Japan! It almost seems as if England had reached the point where her civilisation means the decay of the primitive virtues possessed by man, and that she bids fair to descend the reverse slope day by day. It is useless to comment on our lack of preparation and the deplorable want of administrative ability displayed on all sides during the South African war; they have been carefully catalogued by a Royal Commission. It is rather to the conduct of the troops in the field that we must turn. The number of surrenders in the South African war do not constitute pleasant reading, and seem to point to the fact that as a military people we have sadly fallen from our former high estate.

Our national deterioration as thus shown would be more disquieting if it was not that many of the line battalions proved themselves as good as ever. This seems to show that, given sufficient preparatory training, the material can still be found in the country; but as no effort is made to give the necessary training and discipline, the situation must be regarded as serious. I have attributed the success of the Japanese in the late war to the national life of Japan, and the resulting excellent condition in which soldiers take the field. If the success of the Japanese can be largely due to their home life, there can be little doubt that our deterioration arises from the same cause.

England at present lives on her fat, like the bear, whose long winter sleep is broken by no pangs of hunger. In the spring the bear again awakes to pre-

pare himself for the next cold season. In England a summer's accumulation of fat is considered sufficient to carry us on to the end of all time. Warfare and its serious preparation plays no normal part in the life of the nation, and there can be little doubt that if we continue in the future as we have done in the past, our fall will date from the day we are faced with a serious crisis. If every nation was to deteriorate at the same rate, we should soon have the millennium so many humanitarians desire; but, unfortunately, while the warlike spirit dies in some, it is retained by others. The latter must sooner or later usurp the place of those no longer qualified to hold the positions they have created in the past.

We live in an age of shams. Events which formerly would have passed unnoticed are now magnified out of all proportion to their merits. Actions which were undertaken as a duty or incidentally as a profession, are now made the subject of special reward and recognition. For every medal cast a century ago there must be twenty now, and these are distributed for the most ordinary services. The indiscriminate manner in which honours were bestowed after the South African war amounted to a scandal, and caused many officers to leave the service in disgust at the injustice of the system.

This lavish distribution of rewards irrespective of merit is as fatal to the *morale* of the army as it is to real patriotism. It is as bad as to double the pay of men who threaten to mutiny, as was done lately in Russia. It is mischievous, because it implies a sense of obligation on the part of the state to those who serve their country in time of war.

This is not the correct view to take of military service. The ideal army is, no doubt, a regular army

recruited by voluntary enlistment, because in such an army there is the atmosphere of voluntary service and the discipline of compulsory service. It has been proved that it is impossible to recruit an army by voluntary enlistment sufficient for our national requirements. Neither do we obtain by such a process the most desirable material. The reason is obvious. The state is not prepared to offer the same advantages to its soldiers as are offered to those who enter the ordinary commercial walks of life. In peace time the army is a poor profession for an ambitious man, because those who fill the rank and file can learn everything there is to be learnt in twelve months. Those who aspire to positions on the staff have ever before them the depressing fact that they are devoting the study of a lifetime to prepare themselves for a contingency which may never arise—the outbreak of war. What can be more pathetic than to read the obituary notice of a general who has enjoyed a distinguished career, who has been covered with decorations, and then to learn that his war service has been nil?

If it is impossible to obtain a sufficient regular army by voluntary enlistment, the only alternatives are that the state must rely on auxiliary forces such as the volunteers, or it must fall back on conscription. Which of the two is desirable? Every one admires the patriotism of busy men who nevertheless find time to devote a portion of each week to prepare themselves for a national emergency. But few who have witnessed modern warfare, and who understand what it means, will derive any sense of security from the knowledge that 200,000 of their countrymen are drilling once a-week to defend the country against the invader. It is the system which is unsatisfactory, not the

men who fill the ranks of our volunteer army. They have proved, by their self-sacrifice under the existing system, that they would be the first to welcome any change which placed our forces once and for all on a satisfactory basis.

The life of a soldier on active service, under modern conditions of warfare, is too strenuous, dangerous, and exacting to be undertaken by those who have followed it at home as volunteers. On a modern battlefield the only troops of any use are those who are absolutely at the disposal of the state, and who can be packed off like goods to the front, prepared to be sent anywhere and to do anything.

The relations which must necessarily exist between a general and volunteers are not conducive to the successful conclusion of war. There must always be in his mind a certain sense of obligation towards them which interferes with the even distribution of hardships amongst his forces, and in the fiercest engagements causes him to rely solely on the regular troops at his disposal.

What commercial man would attempt to run a business on such principles? With clerks who volunteered for the purpose, and who were not his paid servants, or always at his beck and call, he would be fatally handicapped. He would never be in a position to reprimand them for their delinquencies, have his orders properly carried out, or ask them to work overtime or make some special effort. His business would speedily collapse in competition with others run on the usual lines.

If this is true in commerce, it is infinitely more true in war. No general expects as much of volunteers as of conscripts. Would he ask volunteers to assault

such positions and perform such feats of endurance as the Japanese soldiers were called upon to do in the late war? No general should be placed in such a situation; he must have under his command men who can be sent forward, sacrifice or no sacrifice, because as citizens of a particular state they must share the responsibilities as well as the advantages.

War is a deplorable evil, but without it nations rapidly deteriorate. It is necessary at times to separate the good from the bad. As long as war is recognised, it is far better to conduct it thoroughly than in a half-hearted manner. The strain on a great nation during war-time is immeasurably increased, it touches every fibre of national life, its chords vibrate through every home in the land; in many ways its horrors have also multiplied. To bring a campaign to a successful conclusion is to give the most competent men an absolutely free hand. A Japanese general in the field, if he desires to take a position, goes about it in the same manner as a man who buys real estate. The one spends as much money as he thinks fit, the other is prepared to lose as many lives as he deems necessary. Not a word is ever said in criticism of his actions by the literary Napoleons and Moltkes who sit at home. This free hand should be possessed by every general as long as he commands the confidence of his superiors —not the confidence of the nation. During the South African war there were many cases of officers in high positions who would have deserved the V.C. every time they faced an enemy in a subordinate capacity, but who were rendered unfit for even the most humble command by the ever-present fear of hostile criticism.

We in England live in a fool's paradise. We detest the idea of devoting one short year of our lives to the defence of the Empire, a subject which supplies a peroration for every orator, and which is invariably greeted with loud applause. We forget that if universal military service were introduced, the idea of compulsion would be at once eliminated where all are treated alike, and it becomes a recognised factor of our national life. We forget that our little army is but a drop in the ocean compared with our necessities, and costs more than the mighty machine which adds such potency to a certain emperor's telegrams. We rely on one barrier, and that barrier alone stands between England and her foes—our fleet. But what a poor defence is a fleet, however strong, in this age of advanced science! At any hour an invention may come to light which will neutralise decades of shipbuilding, and then the issue will be fought out on land in the primitive method by flesh and blood.

The known methods of destruction caused Japan the loss of one-third of her fighting strength of battleships in a space of twenty minutes, when the *Hatsuse* and *Yashima* were sunk by mines. How would we feel in England if one-third of our battleships were destroyed in the same period of time? It may be said that the contingency is too remote to be seriously considered; the people of Japan might have made the same remark when they heard that the *Yashima* and *Hatsuse* were sailing on a calm sea ten miles from Port Arthur. Remote contingencies have often changed the course of great events, and it only needs a combination of unfortunate circumstances to leave our shores open to the invader.

How unfavourably does our conduct at home during

the war in South Africa compare with the conduct of the people of Japan during the war with Russia. In the Japanese we see a quiet, determined, intensely patriotic race, ready to make any sacrifice of time or money in the national cause. The people awaited with perfect composure the receipt of news, on which their very existence as a nation hung. When favourable tidings was received they rejoiced, but in a very sedate manner. The processions consisted of orderly crowds of men, women, and children, who carried flags and lanterns. I doubt if any victory like the fall of Port Arthur, the battle of Mukden, or the battle of the Sea of Japan, caused a single glass more liquor to be consumed in Tokio. Tribulation was taken in the same calm manner; the even temperament of the people never changed under such appalling disasters as the loss of the *Hatsuse* and *Yoshino*, in a single day, nor would it have changed had it been generally known that the *Yashima* was also destroyed. Compare such behaviour with the receipt of the news of the relief of Mafeking, some small success or disaster to an isolated column, or the historic return of the C.I.V.'s.

We have prided ourselves for years on the fact that we are a phlegmatic race, ready to take every turn of the wheel of fortune with equal stoicism. In reality we are a hysterical nation. John Bull still appears in popular caricature as a solid, red-faced, substantial person, incapable of being aroused by even an explosion under his house. What a farce is such a portrait! He should be represented thin, neurotic, idle, conceited, and too lazy to prepare against attack, alternating between excessive optimism and excessive despair. He calls out the same

battle-cries of fifty years ago in an unconvincing voice; and relieves his over-wrought conscience at periodical intervals by the appointment of a Royal Commission.

There is more fuss made in England over the departure and return of a single citizen soldier than over the departure and return of all Oyama's million heroes. The one nation deals with war in a business-like manner, claims her soldiers as her due, and sends them home when she has finished with them. The other, by extravagant display, by music-hall effusions, by bounties, buns, and beer, stirs up an entirely false and temporary feeling of patriotism in the minds of those peculiarly susceptible to the influence of brass bands. She sends them to the front, and removes any general who sacrifices one of these national darlings unnecessarily. Then when the war is over they are received back in an extravagant manner utterly out of accordance with their martial feats.

Is the supremacy of Japan in the art of war destined to last, or is it a mere mushroom growth, which after a few decades of contact with the demoralising effects of western civilisation will succumb to its influence? We can but attempt to draw conclusions from the signs which are already manifest. The former statesmen of Japan seemed to have recognised that decay was bound to follow the opening up of the country to the foreigner, for they passed the most rigid exclusion laws in their endeavours to stave off the inevitable. The troops recruited from the great manufacturing district of Japan, Osaka, have on occasions failed to give entire satisfaction. In Osaka the conditions of life approximate to those in our own manufacturing towns. It has been frequently remarked that many Japanese, who come to

Europe, and spend years in universities, go back to their country with little trace left of those qualities which have proved the strength and safeguard of Japan during the late war. I do not refer to those who visit western nations for the express purpose of studying shipbuilding, or the arts of war and peace; they are picked men, and a more hard-working, self-sacrificing class it would be impossible to find anywhere. I refer to the idle class, few in number, who do exist, even in Japan, and come to Europe to acquire our manners and customs. It may be said that they do not represent the bulk of the nation, and that it is not fair to take them as an example. That is certainly true, but their very existence proves that the element of deterioration is not wanting, and only needs development.

Japan has crowded into a few years the experience and lessons which most nations have taken centuries to acquire. General Nogi's army underwent in a period of six months the changes which usually come over an army in the course of many decades. In the reckless attempts to rush Port Arthur in August 1904 was seen a young nation, whose soldiers regard danger like children, and who are almost ignorant of what it means. The early assaults partook of the nature of enjoyable picnics. We see this same reckless spirit in the manner in which our own soldiers, or the revolutionary soldiers of France, fought a century ago,—men who apparently sacrificed their lives for the mere love of fighting.

Later in the siege quiet organised determination took the place of fanatical recklessness; the Japanese fought no longer as a pleasure, but as a duty, they went into action with the same courage but without

the former joy of battle. The armies who fought in the Crimea displayed the same spirit. Towards the end of the siege of Port Arthur came the stage where men had acquired nerves, and at times were liable to be seized with sudden panics, and on one occasion at least refused to advance when ordered. Into a period of six months the Japanese crammed a century of warfare, and the strain was more than men could stand. This was also our experience in South Africa. Unfortunately we seem to have deteriorated as a nation, whereas only small portions of the Japanese army became demoralised.

Nevertheless as a fighting race Japan has already passed her zenith, because the soldiers who went through the terrible strain of the war are very different to the men who left for the front two years ago. Over half a million of men will carry the traces of the struggle through the nation. The next generation will be of a different stamp to the heroic nerveless type who fought so well for Japan in the past. Education, quick transit, increase of wealth and luxury and the accompanying charms of Western culture, will gradually leave their mark on the people. In many ways the nation will improve, but as a fighting machine, pure and simple, the Japanese army is bound to decline, as every other army has done in the past. This implies no derogation to their national character, and I simply advance it as proof of the argument that the Japanese are, after all, built on similar lines to the Western races, only at present they are several stages behind the decay caused by the development of the resources of civilisation. Japan has overtaken the West in many of the arts of peace and war. Whether she is destined to deteriorate with a like

rapidity is an interesting question, but too much a moot-point to be dealt with here.

In the chorus of admiration which has arisen all over the civilised world for the deeds performed by the Japanese in war, the meed of praise due to the Russians is apt to be overlooked. Yet, when all is considered, the Russian soldier individually fought better and gave more trouble to the Japanese than the soldier of any other nation would have done under similar circumstances. The strategy of the generals was non-existent, the administration of the army was obsolete, the food and equipment were the spoil of contractors. The officers were often badly trained, dissipated, and unfitted to lead their men. Russia, in spite of her defeats, need not despair, because the steadfast courage of the private soldiers on innumerable occasions proves that the great heart of the nation is the same. A Russia oppressed by ignorance and Czardom has been a much-feared enemy in the past; but a free Russia, with ninety millions of people enlightened, educated, devoted and loyal to their emperor and to their country, will have at her disposal the most formidable fighting machine the world has ever seen. If Russian troops are so superlative in defence, it only needs a development of individual intelligence and sound army training to render them equally formidable in attack, because the essential qualities for attack and defence are the same —high courage and coolness under all circumstances. Of the soundness of Russia's fighting material no one who witnessed the defence of Port Arthur, and above all the combat on 203 Metre Hill, can have any doubt.

The imagination of the private soldier, Russian or Japanese, in its ignorant simplicity rarely expands beyond his regimental horizon. The great issues which

cause nations to go to war, the political principles involved, and the moral standpoint of actual right or wrong, are not for him. He was not taken from the plough to think for his country, but to add weight to the words of those who think for him. He is merely a brick in the regimental wall, which may be called upon to resist the onslaught of his country's foes. In the hour of battle it is his bounden duty to remain steadfast in any position in which he is placed. The soldiers of Russia and Japan answered the call nobly throughout the siege of Port Arthur; both displayed great qualities under the most trying circumstances. The attention of the world has been drawn to the victors rather than to the vanquished, but it would be invidious to discriminate between the respective merits of the races, for each commands the highest admiration.

APPENDIX.

THE THIRD ARMY.

Commander-in-Chief . . General Baron Nogi.
Chief of Staff . . . Lieutenant-General Ijichi.
Chief of Artillery . . Major-General Teshima.
Chief of Naval Staff . . Commander Iwamura.

1st Division, Tokio District. Lieutenant-General Matsumura (died a few weeks after termination of siege).
Chief of Staff . . Colonel Hoshino.

1st Brigade. Major-General Yamamoto (killed near Namakoyama), succeeded by Major-General Baba.

1st Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Ohara.
15th Regiment. Colonel Iguchi.

2nd Brigade. Major-General Nakamura (afterwards severely wounded).

2nd Regiment. Colonel Tanabe.
3rd Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Ushijima.

7th Division, Hokkaido District. Lieutenant-General Osako.
Chief of Staff . . Colonel Koidsumi.

13th Brigade. Major-General Yoshida.

25th Regiment. Colonel Watanabe.
26th Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Yoshida.

14th Brigade. Major-General Saito.

27th Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Okuda.
28th Regiment. Lieutenant-General Murakami.

9th Division, Kanazawa District. Lieutenant-General Baron Oshima.
Chief of Staff . . Colonel Sunagai.

6th Brigade. Major-General Ichinohe.

7th Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Ouchi (killed).
35th Regiment. Colonel Nakamura.

18th Brigade. Major-General Hirasa.

19th Regiment. Colonel Sagi (wounded), afterwards Colonel Hatori.
36th Regiment. Colonel Fukuya.

11th Division, Shikoku and Matsuyama District. { Lieutenant-General Tsuchiya (wounded), succeeded by Lieutenant-General Samejima.
Chief of Staff . . Colonel Ishida.

10th Brigade. Major-General Kamiwo.

12th Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Miyama.
43rd Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Nishiyama.

22nd Brigade. Major-General Yamanaka.

22nd Regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Awaki.
44th Regiment. Colonel Ishiwara.

1st Kobi Reserve Brigade (Tokios). Major-General Takenouchi.

1st Regiment.
15th Regiment.
16th Regiment.

4th Kobi Reserve Brigade (Osakas). Major-General Tomoyasu.

8th Regiment.
9th Regiment.
38th Regiment.

ARTILLERY OF THE THIRD ARMY EMPLOYED DURING THE SIEGE OF PORT ARTHUR.

Guns—		
4·7 naval		10
6-inch naval		4
12-pounders, naval		20
10·5 cm., Krupp		4
Bronze guns		30
8·7 cm., Russian		6
Field-guns		146
Mountain-guns		72
Total		292
Howitzers—		
28 cm.	18	
15 cm.	16	
12 cm.	28	
Total		62
Mortars, about		160
Grand total		514

THE GARRISON OF PORT ARTHUR.

Commander-in-Chief on Liautung Peninsula — General Stoessel.
Chief of Staff — Major-General Reiss.
Chief Engineer — General Kondrachenko.

4th and 7th Divisions—

Regiments, Siberian Rifles—
25th, 26th, 27th, 28th.
7th Reserve Battalion.
3rd Reserve Battalion.
11th Regiment.
12th Regiment.
4th Artillery Brigade.
Fortress Artillery Detachment.
Kwantung Artillery Detachment.
Gendarmerie.

PRISONERS surrendered at the Capitulaton of Port Arthur.

The Army—		
Generals		8
Field officers		57
Other officers		531
Civil officers		99
Surgeons		109
Chaplains		13
Total		817
Non-commissioned officers and men		22,434
Grand total		23,251
The Navy—		
Admirals	4	
Captains	100	
Lieutenants	200	
Chaplains	7	
Civil officers	500	
Total	811	
Sailors and marines	4500	
Grand total		5,311
Non-combatants		3,645
Grand total		32,207
Sick and wounded		13,000
Grand total of Army, Navy, and non-combatants who surrendered		45,207

STORES found in Port Arthur after Capitulation.

	Approximate Figures.
Army Department—	
Rye-flour	700 tons.
Crushed wheat	80 "
Beans	700 "
Corned beef	40 "
Biscuits	60 "

Salt	400 tons.
Maize	40 "
Sugar	20 "
Rice	1 ton.
Barley	2 tons.

Navy Department—

Wheat-flour	700 tons.
Sugar	40 "
Butter	2 "

Extras—

Horses	1920

Large quantities of vodka.

THE SPOILS OF PORT ARTHUR.

Forts	59
Guns, large calibre	54
medium calibre	149
small calibre	343
Total	546
Shells, all calibres	82,670
Explosives	1588
Rifles	35,252
Swords	1891
Torpedoes	60
Powder	30 tons.
Pistols	579
Rifle ammunition	2,266,800 rounds.
Ammunition waggons	290
Carts	65
Train carts	606
Searchlights	14
Telephone apparatus	134
Telegraph apparatus	15
Signalling apparatus	3
Entrenching tools	not numbered.
Horses	1920

SHIPS.

Battleships	4
Cruisers	2
Gunboats and destroyers .	14
Steamers	10
Launches	8
Miscellaneous craft . .	12
Small steamers . . .	35

DIARY.

May 1904.

26th. Battle of Nanshan.
31st. The Third Army lands at Kerr Bay.

June.

1st. Occupation of Dalny.
26th. Capture of Kensan and Witosan.

July.

3rd-5th. Counter-attacks of the Russians on Kensan.
26th-28th. Battle of the Green Hills.
30th. Russians retire within their permanent works.

August.

7th-9th. Assault and capture of Taikosan and Shyokosan.
12th-15th. Preliminary operations against Metre Range.
22nd. Capture of the Banrhusan Works.
23rd. Repulse of the Japanese from Bodai. End of the first general assault.

September.

1st-20th. Sapping operations.
20th. Capture of Namakoyama and the Suishien Lunettes.
21st. First repulse of the Japanese from 203 Metre Hill.

OCTOBER.

1-16th. Sapping and mining operations against the permanent works.
15th. Capture of Hachimachayama.
26th. Capture of the upper trench-lines on Nirusan and Shojusan.
30th. The second general attack on the eastern forts.

NOVEMBER.

1st-23rd. Destruction of the counterscarp works of North Keikwansan, Nirusan, and Shojusan.
23rd. Repulse of the Japanese from Higashi Keikwansan.
26th. The third general assault on the eastern forts.
27th. Commencement of the attack on 203 Metre Hill.

DECEMBER.

5th. Capture of 203 Metre Hill.
6th. Capture of Akasakayama.
6th-10th. Destruction of the Russian warships.
18th. Capture of North Keikwansan.
28th. Capture of Nirusan.
31st. Capture of Shojusan. Fall of the line from Higashi Keikwansan to Shojusan.

JANUARY 1905.

1st. Capture of Bodai. Stoessel asks for terms.
2nd. Capitulation of Port Arthur.
13th. Triumphal Entry of the Japanese into Port Arthur.

INDEX.

Akasakayama Works, 312; attacked, 314; evacuated, 328.
Alexeieff, Viceroy, and the fortifications of Port Arthur, 310.
Artillery, effects of modern, 119; absence of heavy siege-guns, 157; number of guns, &c., of besiegers, 162; Chief of, 165; feeding the guns, 167; employed during the siege by the Japanese, 502.
Howitzers: 28-centimetre, 158; their positions, 161; number engaged by the besiegers, 163; ammunition, 168; first shot from the 28-centimetre, 171.
Wooden mortars, 183.

Baba, Major-General, 267.
Banrhusan East, 44; appearance of, after bombardment, 175.
" West, 44.
" Works, capture of, 71-82.
Bayan badly damaged, 442.
Beri beri, 105.
Bodai, 41; an important position, 45; attacked, 83-102; Japanese wounded, 104; final assault, 373; captured, 375; after the siege, 431.

Capitulation, letter of, and acceptance, 376, 379; signed, 389; Japanese rejoicings, 391.
Chinese, loot Dalny, 14; coolies, 255; farmhouse described, 256; manners, 259; admirable qualities, 260.

Daianchisan Fort, 50; after the siege, 437.
Dalny, described, 9; Russian life in, 10; the base of the Japanese armies, 11; evacuated by the Russians, 12; looted by the Chinese, 14; occupied by Japanese, 25; busy during the siege, 251.

Elliott Islands, 16.
England and Japan compared, 488-494.

Fukashima, General, and General Nogi, 269, 307.
Fushima, Prince, at the battle of Nanshan, 21.

Germany occupies Kiao-Chau, 7.
Grenades, used at Namakoyama, 149; use abandoned in attack, 184.

Hachimachayama, 45; bombarded and captured, 191.
Hakuginsan group of forts, 39.
Higashi Keikwansan, 39; described, 40; attacks on, 220, 277; attack on, fails, 291; evacuated and blown up by the Russians, 377; after the siege, 432.
Higashi Keikwansan Tonan, 39.
Hirasa, Major-General, 32.
Hori, Lieutenant, 80, 135.
Hospitals, 245-251.
Howitzers. *See* Artillery.

Ichinohe Fort, 44.
Ichinohe, Major-General, 32; captures Banrhusan East, 77; the hero of the siege, 415.
Ijichi, General, described, 116.

Isusan Fort, described, 49 ; after the siege, 436.

Japan, the Liautung Peninsula ceded to, 1 ; evacuated the Liautung Peninsula, 5 ; prepares for the inevitable struggle, 6.
Japanese, victory at Nanshan, 15 ; number engaged, 18 ; frontal attack fails, 19 ; turning movement by the Osaka Division, 21 ; defeat of the Russians, 23 ; occupy Dalny, 25 ; occupy Witosan, 28 ; capture Kensan, 29 ; take possession of Shaopingtau, 30 ; advance, 32 ; their artillery fire, 33 ; casualties, 37 ; capture Taikosan and Shyokosan, 63 ; capture the village of Suishien, 75 ; assault and capture the Banrhusan Works, 71-82 ; attack Bodai, 83 ; repulsed, 100 ; camp life, 103 ; wounded at Bodai, 104 ; cases of beri beri, 105 ; rations, 107 ; stoicism under pain, 110 ; their politeness, 111 ; simplicity in everything, 114 ; encampment described, 130 ; shelters, 131 ; canteens, 133 ; their cleanliness, 133 ; resume active operations, 137 ; attacks on Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill, 140 ; capture Namakoyama, 151 ; attack on 203 Metre Hill fails, 151 ; occupy Kouropatkin Fort, 153 ; abandon it, 153 ; capture the Suishien Works, 154 ; their use of the telephone, 163 ; ammunition for guns, 167 ; life in the trenches, 178 ; bombard and capture Hachimachayama, 191 ; attack Nirusan, 199 ; attack Shojusan, 200 ; photographers, 200 ; effect of nerves, 205 ; had little knowledge of the fortifications, 209 ; assault on the Keikwansan forts, 207-231 ; sapping and mining, 232-244 ; courage, 236 ; hospitals and transport, 245-255 ; treatment of wounded, 246 ; second assault on the Keikwansan forts, 281-306 ; losses, 304 ; assault and capture 203 Metre Hill, 307-332 ; their winter dwellings described, 342 ; assault and capture of Nirusan, 359 ; Shojusan and Bodai captured, 366, 373 ; soldiers celebrate their victory, 391 ; formal entry into Port Arthur, 408 ; ceremony of invocation in honour of the dead, 418 ; their unprecedented courage, 470 ; losses during the siege, 474 ; their leading characteristics, 476 ; heroism during the siege, 478 ; soldiers differ from those of other nations, 481 ; effect of the national life, 483 ; the Third Army, 500.

Kamiwo, Major-General, 25.
Keikwansan forts attacked, 207-231.
Kensan, its strategical value, 27 ; captured by the Japanese, 29.
Kiao-Chau occupied by Germany, 7.
Kinchau evacuated by the Russians, 16.
Kobuyama, 41.
Kodama, General, and General Nogi, 269, 307.
Kondrachenko, 69 ; killed, 357 ; life and soul of the defence, 465.
Kouropatkin, 64, 65, 66, 69, 451, 452, 457.
Kouropatkin Fort, attacked, 74, 151 ; occupied by Japanese, 153 ; abandoned, 154.

Liaoyang, battle of, 69.
Liautung Peninsula, ceded to Japan, 1 ; described, 2 ; supports a dense population, 3 ; evacuated by Japan, 5.
Liugen, 53.

Massena, 466.
Matsumura, General, 25 ; attacks Namakoyama and 203 Metre Hill, 140 ; his reputation, 412.
Metre Hill (203), 53 ; its peculiar value, 139 ; operations against, 140 ; Japanese attack fails, 151 ; its importance, 270 ; assault and capture, 307-332 ; described, 311 ; captured, 327.
Mining. *See* Sapping.

Namakoyama, 53 ; described, 139 ; operations against, 140 ; its appearance during the attack, 149 ; captured by the Japanese, 151.

Nanshan, battle of, 15; position of Russians, 17; gunboats at the, 18; numbers engaged, 18; Russian fortifications, 18; Japanese frontal attack fails, 19; turning movement by the Osaka Division, 21; terrible effects of Japanese artillery fire, 23; Russians retreat, 23.
New Banrhusan, 46.
Nirusan Fort, 45; described, 46; attacked, 199; sapped, 240; assault on, 299; its fall, 359; condition after siege, 434.
Nogi, General, 15; his force, 25, 26; his force increased, 32; his headquarters, 112; described, 115, 287; resumes active operations, 137; his luncheon to the correspondents, 173; consultation with Kodama and Fukashima, 269, 307; receives reinforcements, 273; has two sons killed, 336; meets Stoessel, 396; reviews his army and enters Port Arthur, 410; *fête* in honour of the Japanese dead, 418.
Nomizo, Colonel, captures Hachimachayama, 192.
North Keikwansan Fort, 41; described, 42; attack on, 225; its counterscarp defences, 232; its great strength, 239; assault on, 293; its fall, 347-357.

Ojikeishan, 33.
Oku, General, in command at the battle of Nanshan, 15; cuts the railway, 16; occupies Kinchau, 16.
Osaka, General, 414; in command of the 7th Division, 273.
Oshima, Lieut.-General, 32; described, 135; his great popularity, 414.
Ouchi, Colonel, his death, 79.

Paiyuisan Fort aggressive, 142.
Pallada little injured above waterline, 442.
Peresviet much burnt, 446.
Photography, army, 200.
Pitzewo, Japanese headquarters, 26.
Pobieda badly injured, 442.
Poltava little damaged, 446.
Port Arthur, importance of, 3; ceded to Japan, 3; taken possession of by Russia, 7; number of persons there at commencement of siege, 26; Russian main line of defence, 27; description of the defences, 38-54; Russian fleet in harbour, 66; bombardment by night, 179; life of foreigners at the front, 256-267; the Viceroy Alexeieff and its fortifications, 310; destruction of the warships in the harbour, 333-346; number of the garrison, 345; surrender and celebration, 378-400; the negotiations, 384; capitulation signed, 389; Russians march out of, 401; departure of General Stoessel, 403; formal entry of the Japanese, 408; its condition after the siege, 438; description of the sunken fleet in the harbour, 441; capacity for defence, 457; men, ammunition, and food, 458; the siege as a spectacle, 472; material spoils immense, 473; the garrison, 502; prisoners, stores, &c., 503.

Reiss, Colonel, 345; on the surrender, 390.
Retvizan much damaged, 444.
Rice as food, 106.
Rodjesvensky, 67.
Roritsushi Fort, 39.
Royusan. *See* Metre Hill (203).
Rurik, the, takes formal possession of Port Arthur, 7.
Russia, realises the importance of the Liautung Peninsula, 4; takes possession of Port Arthur, 7; might have rendered Port Arthur impregnable, 469; her fighting material, 498.
Russians, evacuate Dalny, 13; evacuate Kinchau, 16; at Nanshan, 17; retreat, 23; losses, 24; number under Stoessel, 26; main line of defence, 27; abandon their whole line, 35; casualties, 37; their fleet at Port Arthur, 66; drive the Japanese from Bodai, 101; attempt to recapture the Banrhusan Forts, 108; sharpshooters, 129; retire from Kouropatkin Fort, 153; their wire entanglements, 186; assault on Higashi Keikwansan, 277; evacuate Akasakayama, 328; warships destroyed, 333-346; evacuate

and blow up Fort Higashi Keikwansan, 377; negotiate for surrender, 384; leave Port Arthur, 401; stubborn courage of the infantry, 448; their losses during the siege, 475; superlative in defence, 498; number surrendered at the capitulation, 503; their stores and ships, 503.

Saharoff, M., Mayor of Dalny, 11; ordered to evacuate Dalny, 12.
Samejima, Lieut.-General, 305.
Sapping and mining, 232-244.
Searchlights, Russian, 91, 92, 93, 94.
Sevastopol sunk in deep water, 447.
Shaopingtau seized by the Japanese, 30.
Shiba, Professor, 340.
Shiki, Major, 122.
Shimonoseki, Treaty of, 1.
Shiyoanchisan Fort described, 48.
Shojusan Fort, 40, 46; attacked, 200; sapped, 241; assault on, 299; blown up and captured, 366; condition after the siege, 435.
Shyokosan, 52; described, 57; captured by Japanese, 63.
Siberian Railway, 4.
Southern Chinese Railway, 51.
Stoessel, General, his force at Port Arthur, 26; attempts to recapture Kensan, 30; offers to surrender, 376; on the siege, 394; meets General Nogi, 396; leaves Port Arthur, 403; and the surrender of Port Arthur, 448-467.
Suishien, 52; description of its condition, 126; captured by Japanese, 154.
Suishien valley, 50; earthworks in, 109; after the siege, 430.
Suishien village captured, 75.

Taikosan, 52; described, 56; captured by Japanese, 63.
Takinouchi, Major-General, 32.
Talienwan Bay, 17; mines in, 28; passage opened, 31.
Tayanko Fort, 50.
Telephone, and modern warfare, 163; in use, 218.
Temple Mountain. *See* Metre Hill (203).
Teruda, Colonel, 265; seriously wounded, 315.
Tomogasu, Major-General, 32.
Transports, 251-255.
Tsuchiya, Lieut.-General, 25; kind to foreigners, 130; attacks the Keikwansan forts, 207-231; wounded, 304.

Vladivostok, 4.
Von Essen, Captain, 334.

Wire entanglements, 186.
Witosan, its strategical value, 27; occupied by the Japanese, 28.
Wounded, Japanese treatment of, 245-251.

Yamamoto, Major-General, 25.
Yamanaka, Major-General, 26.
Yamaoka, Major, 379; totally blinded at Mukden, 380.
Yasuhara, Captain, 382.

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